" Where there is no vision the people perish."

JULY 1925 AUGUST

THE POETRY REVIEW

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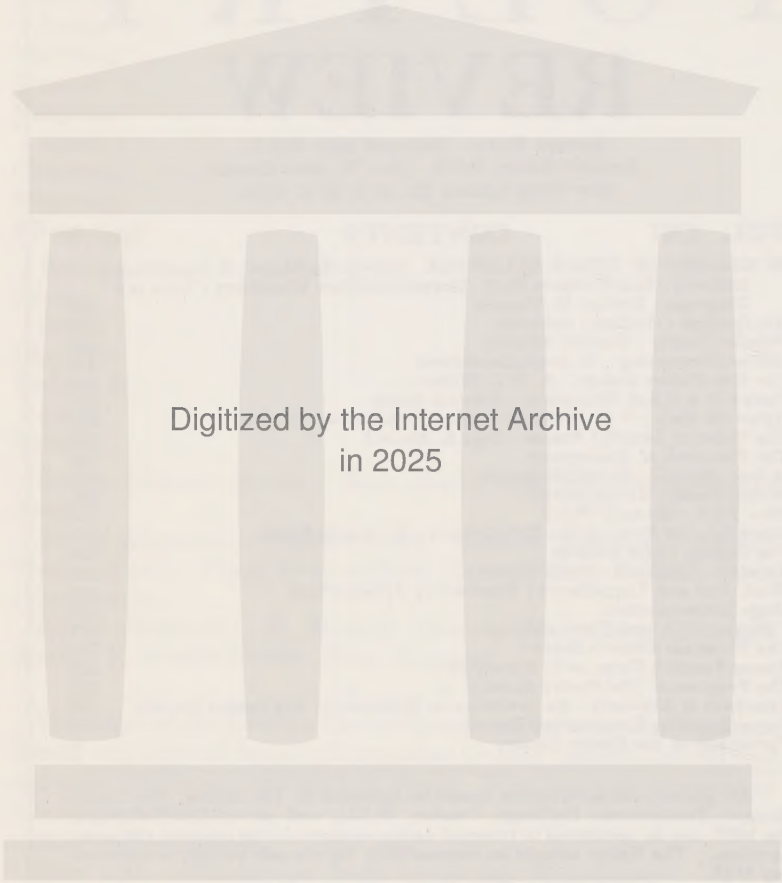

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IN MEMORY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE:

OUR ISRAFEL

I.

THE sad great gifts the austere muses bring
In their stern hands to make their poets of
Were laid on him that he might wildly sing
Of Beauty, Death and Love.

They laid upon him dreams of high romance,
A hunger for a loveliness more strange
Than earth can give in all her piteous chance,
In all her changeless change.

They sent him dreams of Beauty's starrier birth,
Dreams of a beauty toucht with tragic grief—
A wilder beauty than is known to earth,
Where beauty is so brief.

They laid upon him music's trembling charm,
The mystery of sound, of shaken air,
Whose touch can still the spirit or alarm—
Build rapture, build despair.

They struck him with imagination's rod,
The power that built these heavens that soar and seem—
These heavens that are the daring of some God
Stirred by the lyric dream.

And then (for, oh, the muses do not spare !)
They set for him one final gift apart :
They gave him sorrow as a pack to bear,
Sorrow to break the heart.

II.

And so they called the poet into Time,
The saddest and the proudest of the race
That ever came this way with sound of rhyme,
In quest of Beauty's face.

He knew life's immemorial grief—the cry
Of young Love with his ruined rainbow wings,
The pathos of the vanishing, the sigh
Out of all mortal things.

For he was son to Proserpine, and she
Drew his proud bark to many a secret shore
Of the dim continents whose names shall be
Night and the Nevermore.

Steering toward Shadow with melodious helm,
He toucht with sombre prow the wharves of Dis,
Exploring all the hushed and hollow realm
This side the last abyss.

He knew, too, all the melancholy sounds
That beat about the pale Lethean piers ;
And in his side he felt the secret wounds
Known to the lyric seers.

He mused among the gray sarcophagi,
While far upon the rim of ruin fled
A host of hooded forms that hurried by
With laughters to the dead.

He lookt on cities in their crumbling hours,
Where Death obscurely mumbles out his rune,
Hoary, remote, alone, where time-worn towers
Hang spectral in the moon.

III.

He walked our streets as on a lonely strand ;
His country was not here—it was afar.
Not here his home, not here his motherland,
But in some statelier star.

Life was his exile, Earth his alien shore,
And these were foreign faces that he passed ;

For he had other language, other lore,
And he must home at last.

His country was not here, but in the isles
Of Aiden ringed around with lustrous seas,
Where golden galleys skim the silver miles
Or sleep upon the breeze.

And there were gardens where the waters sing
In valleys of a many-coloured grass,
Where strange-eyed birds go by on rainbow wing,
And rose-pale maidens pass—

Gardens of hyacinths and asphodels,
Inwoven with the sound of warbling rills,
With triple-tinted suns and lilied wells,
Walled in by golden hills.

And there he built him palaces of song,
Lifting their spires against the pallid moon,
With corridors where shapes of shadow throng
When night is at her noon.

He sought his dream-love there by many names
Of beauty and of wonder and of peace—
Lenore, Ligeia (burning like pale flames)
Morella, Berenice.

He trod high chambers lit with ruby light,
And heard in the hush the ghostly arras stir,
And stir again, in the deep and secret night,
With memories of her.

He knew the demons' whispers in the deep,
And songs of deathless love where seraphs are ;
He saw the cliffs of Time, a ghostly heap,
But over the cliffs a star !

IV.

O poet, not for you the trampling street,
The wrangling crowds that cry and clutch for gold;
And so you followed Beauty's flying feet
Into the dim and old.

O poet, life was bitter to your heart;
These stones have memories of the tears you shed;
Forgive the serpent tongue, the flying dart—
Forgive us from the dead.

You sang your song: we gave you scorn for pay:
For Beauty's bread we gave a stone, and yet
Because our eyes were holden on the way,
Remember to forget.

Sing, Israfel; you have your star at last,
Your morning star; but we—we still must live!
So now that all is over, all is past,
Forget, forget—forgive!

EDWIN MARKHAM.

TO EDGAR ALLAN POE

Life placed a strange harp in his inspired hand
Aware that but a genius could compose
An anthem that the spheres would understand.
He struck the chords of stress and pent-up woes
Convinced that this deep Universal note
Would stir all hearts and reach each exiled clime.
Instinctively he sensed that from his moat
A song would come to brave the march of Time.
Thus did he play for his own pure delight
With bleeding fingers through an endless night
Of stark deception, turmoil, want and grief
Conceived to rob him of his vast belief
In those rare Idols supermen adore . . . .

R. DUNDRIDGE BALDWIN.

THE HOME OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

Take off the shoes of hasty thought, of heedless blame, of cynic scorn:
And enter softly through the door, where once a poet's dreams were born.
Tread lightly in this peaceful room, where passion's storm long since went by;
And love's sweet radiance lingers yet, like some far-reaching melody.
Forget to-day the wasted years, the vain remorse, the wayward will;
Think with what striving wings he soared, and soaring, draws our spirits still.

Strange watchers guard this quiet place, fair home where bygone visions rise;
Dim presences, with star-crowned brows and pity in their beaming eyes.
Out from the years they lit with fire, from peasant plough, from stately home,
From London's stir, from tideless seas, his comrades and his kinsmen come.

While with them, from his unknown grave, there shows the shadowed wraith of one
Two cities hurried to his doom—the young sad form of Chatterton.
"Beyond Atlantic waves," they say, "in speech like ours your songs were sung:
Like us you sent your message on to all who speak the English tongue.

"Like us, you wove your fabric fair of dreaming thought and careless rhyme,
And bore aloft your lamp undimmed to light the path of coming time.
"Like ours, your life's brief hour of pain went by,—and in the great beyond

We claimed you, where our spirits wait, one in the poet's
deathless bond."
Pass gently from this house of dreams, where reverent
hearts and fingers twine
A laurel wreath of memory, to glorify this simple shrine.

JANE PROTHERO NOTT.

CARILLON

(*To* EDGAR ALLAN POE.)

At Strasburg, on the blue Alsatian plain,
Within the stone-walled, high cathedral tower
The bells toll forth each passing day and hour.
Here, borne on winds, and gathered grain on grain
By errant birds, and nurtured by the rain,
Gay gardens grow ; until in beauteous bower
Bright roses bloom, and many a flaming flower—
They gleam like glowing lamps above the main.

In bed of asphodel and blossoming mead
By Houris watered, bards from every clime
Have dropped each one his fructifying seed.
Within your tower, safe from the rack of time,
In notes the listening ear must ever heed,
Your soul beats out its strange, immortal rhyme.

BENJAMIN COLLINS WOODBURY.

AN EPITAPH

YOU will hear again,
You will hear in your mind
The faint wail of the rain
And the sigh of the wind
And the sound of the clay
That your feet left behind.

ANTHONY SYLVESTER.

THE POE MEMORIAL

Poe's cottage ! humble, meagre, tiny, neat,—
Remote upon a hillside with its patch
Of lawn, its palings and its gate,
Veranda, parlor, kitchen, climbing stair,—
All miniature, all echoing the farm
And simple village life of long ago.
'Twas here he trudged along the sandy road,
Rutted and winding, stretching endlessly
Through wooded hollows, past green meadows, tilled,
And dotted with low buildings ; where perhaps
An elm tree bending o'er a farmyard knoll,
Or rail fence overgrown with blackberry vines
Might frame a glimpse of distant, happy shores
Beyond the dreaming sound.
'Twas on this porch
He clasped her at the latest close of day,—
Child-wife and husband-lover,—home once more,
And empty handed,—bringing but himself
From the lost battle of a tragic life.
Here is the bed she lay on at the end,
While over her the poet spreads his coat,
Hardly to warm her body, yet her soul.

The Concourse roars with traffic, giant trucks,
Electric hammers, derricks, monster arms
That swing in the air and heave like Sisyphus
Mountains of rock and skyward-soaring beams,
Clattering and ghastly. This quaint rescued gem,
Poe's Cottage, shrinks,—grows smaller every day ;
Yet shines more mystically.
Poets take heart !
Fame with invisible pinions fans the world
And winnows from the furnace-blasts of life
Its drops of gold. Songs, melodies
Cast on the air,—lost in a life's collapse,—
Have summoned from the limits of the earth
Legions of blessed thoughts to guard the place
Where love in heart-break triumphed o'er despair.

JOHN JAY CHAPMAN.

1 6

The solemn cadence of your melodies
Is like the syllables of Southern pines
Sheerly beautiful above grave seas ;
Magnificence from mystic argosies
That fared to visit Beauty's untold shrines.
  Ulalume, Helen, Lenore, Annabel Lee—
  For song's sweet sake, though hearts should break,
  You wrought rare harmony.
Your songs were *you*, and their much-loved designs
Are hallowed in your home where beauty shines
Till here, as in a violin, one sees
The raptured radiance of symphonies.

Your " heart strings were a lute," my Israfel,
Who sang " where melancholy waters lie,"
And " double beauty " from your sad lips fell
Who knew the " solemn silentness " so well.
And, though immortal, learned what 'tis to die.
  Ulalume, Helen, Lenore, Annabel Lee—
  From dark retreat your songs so sweet,
  Of truest melody,
Were haunted by the rhythmed, tireless swell
Of seas unseen ; as angel-forces fly,
Your vivid, grieving lyrics long shall ply
Between the shores of Paradise, the pits of Hell.

You loved with touching passion : your lyric art
Was wrought in hours when many wants oppressed,
Till none shall quite forget your troubled heart,
As if in " The Haunted Palace " you lived apart,
And know the very " Valley of Unrest."
  Ulalume, Helen, Lenore, Annabel Lee—
  When that heart broke, sheer song awoke
  In purest melody.
What Beauty, even when you failed, possessed
By love : poet of night's rich meters, rest !
Your cottage stands ! (One feels the held tears start) :
You've passed to realms where loved ones cannot part !

EVELYN M. WATSON.

PSYCHIC POETRY

AT intervals, during the last few years, a certain number of little "booklets," or pamphlets, have been published from Glastonbury, bearing the name "The Glastonbury Scripts." These publications, for which Mr. F. Bligh Bond and his collaborators are responsible, claim definitely to be of psychic origin. They have been produced "automatically"—that is to say, through the medium of writing which, the authors assert, flowed unknowingly from the pen, without either active volition or the conscious exercise of creativeness. Sometimes the writers of these scripts have been unable to read what was written—words were run into each other or set down almost illegibly. On other occasions the writing has been clear, distinct, and very rapid. In some of the manuscripts the form is almost metrical and their Editor, Mr. F. Bligh Bond, has found no difficulty in transposing it into simple narrative blank verse—such quietly moving blank verse as was used naturally by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and, at times, by Tennyson. There is no ecstasy of movement, nor rapture of imagery, in this blank verse: it is tranquil and unassuming, but it does very clearly that which it sets out to do—namely, recounts certain stories that have for their primary interest the fact that they were delivered in this "automatic" writing to those who, in their turn, passed them on to the public.

Now, in the Glastonbury Scripts are several poems which their scribes claim were dictated to their subconscious minds, under the names of some among the little band of Eastern missionaries who came to Britain in the first century, and settled in Glastonbury under the direction of Joseph of Arimathea. Without offering any comment upon this, I would like to say that I find unusual interest in these poems on account of a personal experience of about eighteen years ago, which occurred during a time when I was neither studying the cycle of Arthurian and Grail legend, nor even thinking about it in any way. With one or two friends I had been playing what we used to call "tumbler-game"—a game played with a kind of home-made Planchette! We used to print the letters of the alphabet on tiny squares of

paper, set these letters " higgledy-piggledy " round a small smooth circular table, invert a tumbler in the centre, put the tips of our fingers upon the tumbler (two or three people are necessary for the experiment) and proceed to ask the glass questions ! The tumbler would reply by sliding rapidly across the table, and touching letters one after another, by means of which it spelt out its answers. I can assert truthfully that no volition of my own was ever used, and I am sure it was the same with the other players—for we never looked upon the proceedings as anything but a rather absurd game. We found that the tumbler would literally fling shrewd original kinds of proverbs at us, or tell us long and generally ridiculous stories about our acquaintances. We never knew what was coming, and we all knew that nobody " pushed "—although we were frequently accused of it—for the feeling under our fingers was that the tumbler always *pulled* towards the letter it wished to indicate. That used to be a very curious feeling—a sense of a strong *outer* force dragging the glass away from control. What that force was I have never understood. But it was there, and, on the occasion of which I am speaking, it seemed to be there in an unusual degree.

Only two of us were playing, and a third—a well-known dramatist, who is no longer living—was writing down the results, when a sudden change came over the usual absurdities of the tumbler. We were told, all at once, that *Joseph of Arimathea* was with us, and wished to dictate a poem. The poem was called " Daylight Upon the Roofs of Asgard," and it was spelt out instantly and rapidly, and taken down by our listening friend as fast as it came. These are the lines we received :

Yonder by night and yonder,
  Stars and the winds and sun,
Rocks and the sea flowing under,
  Body and Spirit are one.

Yonder by day and yonder,
  Morn and the chill winds weep,
Mary and Jesus ponder
  Over the children asleep.

Mary, the mother of children,
Singing a dream of pain,
Jesus, the brother of children,
Shedding His blood in vain.

Cover His wounds with roses,
Lilies are Mary's tears.
Dead little son of Joses,
Flower that the maiden bears.

Gather the stars of heaven,
Bind them about His brow.
Build Him a cradle of seven,
Rock Him to sleep in the Plough.

I offer the verses without commenting on their worthiness or unworthiness. Their origin perplexed me for years, and what I found specially puzzling was the association with Norway, its sea-pierced rocks, midnight sun, and Scandinavian mythology. I was never aware, and, though I often asked those likely to know, could never find out that Joseph of Arimathea had had anything to do with Norway. Then, only last summer, many many years after my odd experience, I read in Miss Jessie Weston's wonderful book, *From Ritual to Romance*, that Joseph of Arimathea was the patron saint of Norway, that he had taught Christianity there, and that some of the oldest of the Grail material is concerned with his residence in that country, while one of the legends about him states that he is buried there in (I think) a monastery, together with the Lance and the Grail.

This rather strange occurrence naturally made me study the Glastonbury Scripts with immense interest, when one or two of those dealing with Joseph of Arimathea came recently into my hands. Mr. F. Bligh Bond has, himself, assured me that they are as entirely " automatic " as my old " tumbler-tales "—and I have no more reason to doubt Mr. Bond's word than I have to doubt my own experience. He has also assured me that neither he nor his colleagues had any special knowledge of the enormous amount of material from which the numerous Grail legends have been recovered. I use the word " recovered " advisedly.

Much of this material is practically inaccessible to ordinary readers, and is only known through the patient researches of students.

These Glastonbury Scripts deal very largely with visions and revelations, and the visions and revelations are extraordinarily like those which we read of in the earliest records of the Christian Church. They are well worth studying from this point of view; and what has particularly impressed me in reading them is their resemblance to the visions of Caedmon. Now Caedmon was really our very first national poet: he antedated Chaucer by over seven hundred years. It is a great pity that his poetry is not more accessible, but I do not know of any edition of it that can be obtained for the shelves of ordinary private libraries; and, on the occasions when I have become lost in the beauties of Caedmon, I have been compelled to take my enjoyment in the reading-room of the British Museum.* However, Bede's account of Caedmon is given in all histories of English poetry, and from Bede we learn that Caedmon was a servant in the Benedictine monastery at Whitby, of which St. Hilda was the Abbess (about A.D. 680). When the harp was passed round the table after supper, and those who were gifted played and sang in turn, Caedmon, who knew nothing of either music or poetry, would leave the room and make his way to the stables, for it was his duty to look after the horses. One night, in his sleep, an angel came to him and said, "Caedmon, sing me a song." He answered, "I cannot sing." Then the angel insisted, "Nevertheless, sing." And Caedmon began, all at once, to sing a wonderful song of creation, which song he remembered and continued next day, for it was the song of the angel. From that night he became a poet, and all his poetry is said to have been inspired in dreams.

This, in brief, is Bede's account of the inspiration of Caedmon, the Anglo-Saxon stableman in the Benedictine monastery at Whitby. If we turn to any translation of

* Possibly there are accessible editions of which the readers of the *Poetry Review* may know?

Caedmon we soon see that there is, in his poetry, an extraordinary visionary and imaginative quality; and, whether we accept Bede's story or not, we must admit that Caedmon is the mouthpiece of all the early ecstasy and piety of the British Christian Church. His account of the fall of Satan, or Lucifer, or the Rebellious Angel, is believed by many to have given Milton his material for *Paradise Lost.* Whether Milton really had access to Caedmon or not is hardly a subject for present discussion; but the resemblance between the work of the two poets is most remarkable. Still more remarkable is Caedmon's claim that the story of the mighty revolution in Heaven was *directly revealed* to him. Of all that I have read of Caedmon, however, his *Vision of The Holy Rood*—the poem in which he describes a vision of the Cross—is the most beautiful and the most mystical. He sees the Cross in a dream—shining, flower-decked, lit up with glory, yet dripping with blood. The Cross speaks to him, and tells its story—how it was hewn down in the woods of Palestine, brought to Calvary, and set up for the Crucifixion. What is so impressive in the poem is the sense conveyed of the *radiance*, the willingness, almost the eagerness, of the Sacrifice. "On to the gallows, radiant and unafraid, stepped the Young Hero, determined to save the tribes, even against their will." The Cross goes on to speak of its awe, its wonder, its overwhelming desire to bow low in worship. The whole poem almost disturbs one with its intense beauty and ecstasy of imagination. One would like to see it published with suitable illustrations.

Now, I do not claim for the poetry edited by Mr. Bligh Bond that it has the æsthetic beauty of Caedmon. But I do claim that there is a certain resemblance and that the Glastonbury Scripts have the *visionary* quality that is associated with early stories of the Christian Church. Those with which I am at the moment occupied give some really beautiful versions of the Grail legend, and also of the *Saint Sang* traditions, these traditions being concerned with the bringing to Britain of a phial containing Christ's blood. In the Glastonbury Scripts a story is told of the

transformation of the *Saint Sang* into a precious and beautiful jewel. I have studied the Grail cycle of stories for many years, and have never found such a legend anywhere—though others may have done so. Still, I do not recollect having come across it in Miss Jessie Weston's writings, and she is far and away our greatest authority on the subject. So here, to me, is the intensely interesting point about these Glastonbury Scripts—will the stories told in them ever be verified as authentic tradition, even as my strange little poem of eighteen years ago really had authentic tradition in the association of Norway and Joseph of Arimathea ?

I have not space to quote from the Glastonbury Scripts, but any reader who takes the trouble to study them (they may be obtained from Goodall's, Glastonbury) will see what I mean by the *visionary* quality that I find there. There is one vision of the Gold Cup, " large as a man," with the figure of Christ standing upright within it, that reminds me very much of the visions related by Robert de Borron. But Mr. Bligh Bond states specifically that the stories and visions differ in detail—a fact which makes this psychic poetry, to my mind, all the more interesting.

We come back, over and over again, to the question of " direct inspiration." How far was Coleridge psychically inspired when he wrote *Kubla Khan* ? We have his definite assurance—just as we have Caedmon's definite assurance—that the poem about Xanadu was dictated to him in a dream. Are automatic writings a form of dream—a dream going on below the normal, active, daytime consciousness ? Are poets more subject to this form of subconscious composition than they are aware of ? Is it possible that Milton (many people say he *could not* have had access to Caedmon) was equally directly inspired when he gave us the figure of Lucifer, but that he would not admit it? Somehow one could not imagine Milton admitting it. Lovers of Tennyson constantly find this quality in his poems. It is something rather indefinable, but one imagines one recognises it when there. We wonder, and hesitate to form an opinion, but Coleridge's own words—

the words with which the mysterious lines of *Kubla Khan* ends—ring in our ears with their sense of heavenly magic:

" All should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

BLANCHE WINDER.

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

THEY tread this earth no longer,
their wings beat not the air ;
their ancient haunts are still and cold,
hidden beneath the heaped-up mould ;
their midnight rings are bare.

In what new distant country
dwell they, beneath what sky ?
Where are their airy palaces,
in what new misty mountain is
built their frail fantasy ?

Can mortals make the journey,
and see those realms again ?
Will a new Elfland sound its horn
in moonlit forests, and forlorn
marshes beneath the rain ?

Have they fled past the sunset
into the purple space ;
and in some yet unwearied world
will their wild melodies be skirled,
their white limbs interlace ?

We are too old and faithless,
our eyes are grown too blind :
Pan with his nymphs far hence is gone,
gone are the courts of Oberon,
and we are left behind :

Left to a world grown empty,
where the young are too wise,
and laugh at tales of faery,
and look at fabled revelry
with dry and starless eyes.

Ah! may I travel at passing,
however lone the way,
until I reach those haunted meres,
where the false lanthorn still appears
when twilight veils the day:

And see Titania dancing,
and hear the pipes of Pan,
and ride on bats with Ariel,
and sleep with Puck in a cowslip's bell,
far from the scorn of man.

G. IRWIN-CARRUTHERS.

FOR ONE FALLEN ASLEEP

PEACE in thy hands!
I wish thee quiet sleeping:
Weary wert thou with watching, worn with pain;
And thou wert fain
To take at last thy sleeping
In the long grasses' keeping.

Peace in thy hands!
This I will whisper thee:
When orchard blossom surges like the sea
That brown-winged poet of the spring
—Thy friend the bright-eyed thrush—shall make
The fragrant branches shake
Singing for thee his clearest carolling.

Peace in thy hands!
In the long grasses' keeping
I wish thee quiet sleeping.

A. DORIS L. WILSON.

POETRY IN A U.S.A. UNIVERSITY

NOT long ago I received a letter from an undergraduate asking me whether I, as a poet, considered poetry a science, and if not, just what I did consider it, and why. My answer does not concern me now, since it was both forced and stupid, but the question did at least reopen a matter in which I had once reason to be personally interested—namely, the effect of a university education on the mind of the young poet. My possible competency to express a fair opinion on the subject is the result of four years' experience in either editing the college "literary magazine," enthusiastically writing, discussing, or studying poetry with other undergraduate enthusiasts, and, after graduation, of collecting the poetry written during that time into an anthology which has but lately been published. (*A Princeton Anthology*, 1921–1925. Princeton University Press.) That the college atmosphere frequently arouses the instinct for poetic expression, and as frequently, after a time, strangles the ability—the poetry, at least, if not the verse—is, however, but one of the themes I would develop. The others are, mainly, the nature and quality of the poetry written by the more educated youth of the day, and the various reasons for that general nature which have suggested themselves to me.

My knowledge of the work of this "youngest generation" is, of course, mainly confined to my own university (Princeton), and while there is much verse being written in the various women's institutions, what I have seen has impressed me but little, so I have not been tempted to increase my familiarity with it. That it is either thin or unrestrained seems usually to be the case; nor can I help believing that, when it is sincere, it is the result of expressing life in terms of unresolved emotions. This was not so fifty years ago, nor will it be fifty years hence; but at present it is at once natural and inevitable, if merely as a reflection of life. That the verse written by the young men of the day also shows a certain unsettled quality of mind is likewise true, but their work is at once more

serious and more real, since the problems of the present civilisation brush its authors more harshly.

But when I say it is, on the whole, serious, I do not refer to the natural morbidity of youth, though its inherent sadness is usually noticeable. Of the former one finds little ; of the latter, much. The note of finer seriousness is evident, however, if one stops to compare the work with similar endeavours of thirty or even ten years past. Sloppy artificiality of diction has now gone, and where the work is "studied," as it must almost inevitably become in a university, the effort is rather toward a heightened directness and simplicity resulting, as it happens, from intense word-study. Rather paradoxically, this leads to a sometimes over-literary quality (as in the work of Schuyler Jackson) an over-calculated subtility or a too tightly packed sensuous content. I refer to such lines as :

> The darkness quivers, and gives place
> To spirits wandering through tumultuous space ;
> They crowd and shudder, they beat the air
> To win the home of Heaven, and rest there.
>
> * * *
>
> I know not how your spirit steers
> Through hopes, and through wind-driven fears,
> Your proud indomitable years.
>
> Give me your peaceful hands, and then
> Give me your peaceful hands again,
> To be your friend, Amen, Amen.

These are both the work of Jackson, and this is fitting, for it was he who practically started the renascence of poetry in Princeton, if such (as it seems) there was, just as it was also he who unconsciously became the dictator of its development. The sudden interest in poetry was no more, perhaps, than a reflection of the growing interest noticeable in all English-speaking countries, but in Princeton it had a magnetic leader, though hardly older than the rest of us, and became, as a result, more than a mere fad. There was much good poetry written in indifferent verse, much indifferent poetry written in good verse, but with a

surprising frequency both the poetry and its expression were simultaneously good, and that is unusual in a group of young enthusiasts.

That the poems are somewhat limited in scope is natural; the experience if not the vision of the authors was limited, and it is a happy fact that they seldom wrote outside of their experience. The work is more sincere and more real as a result. If the subject matter seem to-day somewhat immature, it does not indicate a lack of beauty in the poems, but merely that the experiences, physical or psychic, have become less interesting to us now; they have been outgrown. At the time, however, I remember that the rather callow work of my contemporaries moved me more than the poems of established poets, if the latter did not happen to write within my range of experience. I still reason, that while the desires of youth which are resolved in its poetry, cannot be those of the mature world, because of an untired, sensitive mind and as yet unspent physical energy, the young poet sees at least truly, if not, from later standards, sanely. At least, he sees beauty.

The war, with its ravages on the younger generation, although less felt in this country than elsewhere, has doubtless made us keener to appreciate life with full youthful sensuousness, and yet to view it with a maturity which the youth of twenty years ago did not possess; there is no light heart, although there may be laughter; there is no beauty for beauty's sake, no art for art's, but beauty only comes as the result of a somewhat desperate solution of life or the attempt to construct a new cosmic philosophy. Life, at any rate, and not fancy, is at the bottom of it, and while the outlook is not cheerful, and may be bitter, it is still not morbid with the morbidity of the Nineties.

While, however, each generation must have its own interpretation of existence, it does not immediately establish its own means of expression, and in this a certain derivative quality is necessarily apparent. In a university it is natural that the verse should be conservative, especially since the popularity of *verse libre* has begun to wane, and

it is natural that the study of Milton and the great Victorians should have a marked effect on the technic, if nothing else. But the established Georgians are studied too, and it is wholly reasonable that their rather indefinable qualities should be taken over. What is the result ? The work of the Princetonians is published in England years before it has any recognition in the United States ; a fact not invariably true, to be sure, and yet worth consideration. It has occurred before.

It is doubtless a fact that much of the verse of which I speak is " ingrowing " rather than " outgrowing," and pays more attention, perhaps, to finish than any truly American poetry can or should ; in other words, more attention to the verse than to the poetry—if I mistake not, a fault more characteristic of English work than it is of American. In this case I can assign it to the greater culture and sophistication which exists in an Eastern university, which may or may not be less " American " than the larger environment in which the Western poets seem to live. The poetic product is equally good in either case, if it is expressive of the immediate or any other truth ; but the truths are essentially different. The danger in the university is that the poetry be stifled by over-scholarship, while the less hampered and possibly more inspired verse such as that of many Western poets, and a multitude of women and exotics, is endangered by its very freedom. And I speak not only of *verse libre*. There is a Puritan strain in the East which might produce a Milton ; but only the West has the quality which might produce . . . I can say no better than another Vachel Lindsay.

Last spring, when this poet visited Princeton, and beside his usual readings held a number of informal talks with groups of undergraduates, it was interesting to observe the two tendencies in close contrast. The poet talked of the nature of poetry ; the undergraduates wanted to be told how to write it, wanted him to compare various modern poets, and, in other words, wanted no more than they already had, being too narrow to see it was infinitely smaller than what he was giving them. That a few under-

stood was enough reward, and perhaps there were more than a few ; but none could do more than understand, for the education which had stimulated intellect had drugged the emotions.

It is hardly worth saying that the university has and is no place for a genius, though it may make him a more useful citizen . . . just as it will make a potentially useful citizen somewhat less useful and intellectually more beautiful. It is the great leveller. Under its influence talent becomes critical rather than productive. But there is an age of criticism. It is interesting, therefore, to compare the undergraduates' work in this country with the similar production in English universities, for I believe, on the whole, that the American product, such as I know it, is less conscious, less over-weighted, less " naïve," less nervous, and in general, less " Georgian." I imagine it to be more sane, but the difference on the whole seems slight, and the similarity astonishing ; yet the two products are easily distinguishable, though I am not sure of either the how or the why. Probably it is that we have, as well as the Georgian influence, that of contemporary American poets such as Frost and Robinson—the latter less known in England than he should be.

For a time my contemporaries at Princeton and I did not derive from these sources directly, nor did we even choose our own, somehow following the nearest leader, which happened to be Jackson, and deriving from his sources through his verse, itself derivative . . . at that time an odd mixture of Yeats and Milton, yet still original. He wrote a series of love songs in the manner of Yeats ; others followed. He " discovered " a word, poetically effective ; its vogue was immediate. The plagiarism was not always unconscious ; one merely wrote " in the Jackson manner." Yet for all this, each had his own, and the manners were, on the whole, common property ; it was rather amusing and mutually flattering. After Jackson's graduation, the derivation became more eclectic, with special interest in the Clare school, Robinson, de la Mare, Houseman, and Matthew Arnold ; and finally each

returned to his own style, having had a splendid period of enthusiasm and wide training in technique. Only a few wrote free verse, and they were not of the select coterie ; they simply could not write anything else. It may be said, however, that what they did write was, for the most part, poetry.

The poems were mostly lyric or elegiac ; sonnets proved rather boring, and blank verse almost as much of an evasion as free. This was not, however, always the case, and some good blank verse was written, while there were numerous attempts at " longer poems," more frequently successful than not. Besides this, there was a considerable amount of verse rather epigrammatic in quality, while the range of subject matter, taken all in all, was surprisingly large. This, perhaps, was not unnatural, considering the very divergent personalities which were held together by only one common interest ; that it was a great interest was proved by their mutual toleration of each other which finally ended in a few warm friendships. A not unamusing sidelight on this, however, was a club which lasted for two years and met one night a week. At the meetings the various members would read their work. The comment was always favourable . . . I think because the others did not listen, and felt they had to say something. The first year, a book of verse was published ; it was most successful. The second year the club existed only by means of the additional, and illegal, attraction of " drinks " ; that year, at great expense, it published an indifferently good book of prose. The next year it died. But the interest of the various individuals in their writing of either prose or verse had by no means languished. Informal discussions between two or three friends continued as before, where the burdensome formality of regular meetings had killed the club along with its spontaneity. Possibly we were too considerate of each other's feelings, yet I still feel that an organisation of the sort, however informal, can be of little service to literature, once it has lost its first enthusiasms, as it invariably must.

There is no special reason for mentioning the names of the authors, for they are all obscure. Some of them,

however, have had their work published both here and in England by leading magazines, or have given a book to the public ; and certainly not a few of them will bear watching : Schuyler, Jackson, T. S. Matthews, Briton Busch, T. Spencer, Arthur Sylvester and C. H. D. Robbins, among others. That they still realise their comparative immaturity is a hopeful sign, and that their reception by the public has been favourable, although quiet, is not less so. The future cannot be foreseen, and yet I believe that of this group at least a few will write distinguished poetry, and, it may be, great. I feel it is also a favourable sign that the interest in poetry at Princeton has not especially abated since their graduation, and imagine it to be permanent. Finally, I believe that the same quiet but not less strong enthusiasm exists in the other universities of the country, differing only with their difference in purpose or environment.

Where there is not, in the university, a large foreign element, or a special interest in sociology, the verse will be conservative with the tradition of the past; but it will be both sincere and strong with realisation of the present ; never radical, and yet progressive, building upon the reasonably firm foundations of its heritage. Best of all, it would interpret and be an expression of life both innocent and beautiful, not in itself an end. And that this more thoughtful younger generation is fitted to carry out the expression, just as it is expected to solve every other muddle, I have little doubt. In this case, since poets are much more important among themselves than with the public (and quite rightly) they will not be molested. If they find a solution of the cosmos and content themselves with quietly putting it down on paper, some day or other they may be able to say " I told you so " if it should make them any happier. Possibly they may solve nothing, but merely go on writing good verse, serious, emotional, tragic or comic ; they may even continue to write good poetry. The present question is only, Will it be good ? and I think it safe to prophesy that it will.

EDWARD STEESE.

AFTER THE RAIN

PHYLLIS, tall Thestilis and Amoret,
Young Colin's love, run out after the rain ;
Loud sing the birds, the sun shines forth again,
Low droop the boughs with leaves all glittering wet.
" O ! " Phyllis cries, " the may tree's showering yet,
I'm drenched with blooms ! "—Thestilis laughs amain,
And breaks the heavy blossomed branches, fain
To have such sweets as wreath the boughs quick-set.

So fancy free, for what flowers they may get
Phyllis and Thestilis make light of pain ;
But, hood drawn close and sweet lips kissed in vain,
" O, I'm so cold ! " cries love-blessed Amoret.

This long I pondered till one thought was plain,—
They are most chilled who near Love's fires have lain.

F. EIRENE WILLIAMS.

THE TORCH-BEARER

BECAUSE of you, I have forgot the fine
Laborious work of years, my dream of fame :
Love has devoured in sacrificial flame
The intellectual structure that was mine,
And made of me your echo. I employ
My genius with the immemorial game,
The lure that wantons knew in Tyre and Troy :
Only—unhappier I, that know my shame.

For sometimes in the candid light of morn
I glimpse the pander to my roseate pain—
Nature, who laughs aspiring souls to scorn,
Nature, who sees a necessary tool,
To forge a link in her eternal chain,
And hand the torch to yet another fool !

GERTRUDE PITT.

DEBATABLE POINTS:

I.—THE VALUE OF LENGTHY POEMS

SOMEBODY gave forth the opinion that a poet's capacity for writing lengthy poems with ability was a truer token of his greatness than if he had written nothing but short poetical gems.

Now this is a debatable point. Poetry in its highest form is inspirational, and many would contend that the best and purest inspiration should be brief rather than sustained. Yet nobody would assert that a musician who only excelled in the rendering of short pieces, such as Chopin's Valses, was on a par with one who could, with equal excellence, interpret the Concertos of Beethoven.

Even with composers it is much the same. All the lighter romance music that Chopin ever wrote cannot have the same monumental value as one Beethoven Symphony.

It is not that length of a mediocre order is any test of genius at all. But when the combination of both quality and quantity has reached a zenith and can hold the interest for the greater part of its duration, the achievement is then to be admired.

Now, does this apply equally to poetry ?

A poem on a grandiose scale, like a symphony, shows that its creator possesses constructive power of a high order. Yet is it a test of his poetical worth ? A poem that is comparable in structure and size to a cathedral may not be as æsthetically pleasing to some minds as one which, in its diminutiveness and delicacy, resembles a country cottage. Still the architectural value of the cathedral is greater than that of the cottage.

It seems that the analogy holds good in poetry. The poet who writes always in cottage-form may be a poet of the first rank. But his greatness will be enhanced in the eyes of the true appreciator if he has contributed something of cathedral vastness to the realms of poetical thought. Even though the poet may go down to eternity on account of his brief poems, if his lengthier efforts contain a few messages of rare and outstanding beauty, it will be all towards his glorification and triumph.

One looks on Dante and his mighty edifice, the *Inferno*, with a feeling of literary awe and reverence. Some people may affirm that if Milton had never written *Paradise Lost*, or *Samson Agonistes*, he would have been equally great a poet on account of his sonnets. This opinion may contain an element of truth. Yet surely *Paradise Lost* was the work which really displayed Milton in all his glory.

It seems to be, then, that the poet becomes beloved for his short inspirations, but venerated and canonised for his lengthy ones.

Moreover, surely only a poet of the highest order is capable of excelling himself in a work of any great size. Milton is unquestionably one of the foremost poetical geniuses. His poems, more than any others, are comparable to symphonies in their loftiness and sublimity, and one realises this even more fully in his big works than in his small ones. Yet it is certain that a man need never have written a poem of more than eight lines to be included amongst the foremost poets in the world !

As George Moore says, " A work of art is valuable and pleasurable in proportion to its rarity ; one beautiful book of verses is better than twenty books of beautiful verses. This is an absolute and incontestable truth ; a child can burlesque this truth—one verse is better than the whole poem, a word is better than the line, a letter is better than the word—but the truth is not thereby affected." But, in spite of this, the fact remains that in a big work of merit, if only one has the patience, the opportunity of finding many words and lines of profound beauty is bound to arise.

OLGA K. SOMECH.

II.—THE PLEASURES OF ANONYMITY

In the realms of Faery, where values are less confused than in more material regions, one of the gifts reserved for the specially favoured was an Invisible Cap. This, it was realised, ranked above the mundane bestowals of riches and power—or rather that, properly used, it included them, and was a short cut to the substance of which such

tokens are merely the shadow. But it was an endowment for which a suitable temperament was even more essential than for the reception of other puissant gifts : unless the Cap fitted it was useless to attempt to wear it, and worse than useless to expect any results.

The problem before those who would recreate the insubstantial world is to find some approximation in values with the materials at hand. To do this a wide temperamental range is necessary, and of a type and diversity not to be found in those who are unable to shed, or to subordinate, their own ego. One personality stereotyped in the same guise is not only inadequate to fulfil conflicting needs and requirements, but the mere fact of possessing an open sesame to a given region may be an obstacle in the way of a safe conduct to other territories. The artist should, of all human beings, possess the equivalent of an Invisible Cap, yet, inexplicably enough, his outfit rarely includes this item, though it usually contains every requisite for rapid denudement before an avid and applauding audience. This at least applies to the artist in any recognised branch of the fraternity—the one exception is the anonymous Master in the art of living, whose technique is employed in the process of distilling the most from and putting the most into life. Whether or not another specialised craft has been added, it is not by this that he throws the outermost ring of his personality : it will be of narrower circle than the radius of his influence, both upon his associates and upon many who are affected by means of intermediaries.

Genius alone reverses the position of the two factors, and must ever elude the reach of speculation. Here the output of an art remains the summit-achievement, and should be free in perpetuity from the confusion resulting from the attempt to harness a human being to a sporadic force. The possessor of (or possessed by) Genius, even more than the minor artist, needs the protection of an Invisible Cap if he is to be saved from having his birthright sold over his head for a mess of pottage to be devoured by those who have plundered him. *Chatter about Harriet* not only perverted the motive of all Shelley's

succeeding actions throughout his life, but it also retarded, and possibly even filched from, the full recognition of his genius. So, too, critics with a touch of the lackey in their make-up could only view Keats the Poet through the crude disfiguring colours of an apothecary's shop window. It was not even in unstained well-water that they would have written his name.

There seems more than the testimony of coincidence to suggest that Shakespeare (to whom everything was known) assessed at their full value the benefits as well as the pleasures of anonymity—to himself and to posterity. Conjecture might otherwise have been displaced by certainty concerning The Onlie Begetter of the Sonnets—perhaps to the permanent lowering of our gold standard in the currency of Poetry.

Pride and humility have occasionally identical symptoms : who is to say which is the motor power in shaping the Artist in Anonymity, to whom the overt manifestations of his subsidiary craft suffice for himself alone ? In regard to signed work he may be unwilling to challenge his own individuality ; if what he has produced exceeds the finish of his achievements in establishing living contacts, his personality would be compelled to play second fiddle to his tangible production—if, on the other hand, it is of lesser distinction, he may on this account prefer to disclaim the association. In either event his privacy is invaded, and herein lies the kernel of the matter. Assuming his Invisible Cap, he can watch the reflexes of his handiwork with the impersonal detachment of a spectator. In this manner only will he ever approximate to a true opinion concerning his demonstration in a given art, while practising unhampered the Master rôle which, fugitive and imponderable, is perhaps the more nearly akin to what is durable. Above all, he keeps at bay the encroachments upon his inner freedom which imperceptibly sap creative faculty, or cause it to become immobile at a stage which, at best, means inhibition and more often permanent arrestment. The labelled artist is claimed by his public ; he is in danger of becoming a puppet at the end of a string,

pulled by those who have usurped his functions and demand that the one phase of his personality with which they have identified him should be the *Leitmotif* whatever the variation of the setting. Ultimately, he dare not face his patrons' dissatisfaction at the seemingly contradictory manifestations inherent to any developing art. He must compose, paint, model, write according to the formula accepted as himself, even if his mental outlook has altered to the extent of making a complete cleavage between his personality and his production. The crest of the seventh wave passes him by stranded—a castaway of his own spirit.

It is confusing issues to attempt to judge whether the wearer of an Invisible Cap views the exhibited persons of his confrères behind the footlights with his tongue in his cheek or with a sympathy more complete because it is devoid of rivalry. The point which concerns him is not the appraising of his own or another criterion: it lies in the absence of shackles. With the same unimpeded ease he can traverse unchallenged the crowded high road, or wander, a disencumbered ghost, in the silent deserted glades of Arcady. Not only the freedom of both worlds but of all Cosmos is his. The faery gift of an Invisible Cap has conferred a power of liberation which can be fulfilled in no other way.

A LATE APPEAL

AH, now that Autumn lieth on thy brow,
And Spring hath ceased to gambol in thy soul,
And Winter fears have wanned the starry glow
Of dreams that were thy Summer's aureole;

Wilt thou not hearken to the vows of one
Whose love endured all seasons of thy scorn,
And yieldeth still, beneath an autumn sun,
The tender passion of its vernal morn?

British Legation, CONRAD BONACINA.
Prague.

ACROSS THE MYSTIC BRIDGE.

ONCE upon a time there lay out in the seas of Beauty and Song two islands populated by peculiar peoples, who knew little of each other's pleasures and blessings. For between the two islands lay a magic bridge that could only be crossed by those who used the mystic password, "Duo." And as there were teachers in each land who taught the people, as a matter of patriotic faith, that they should never utter but the word "Unus," each feared to cross. A few ardent souls, risking the charge of heresy, came and went, and reported the peculiar beauties of the land they had gone to visit. Soon the inhabitants of one of the islands overcame their clannish spirit, until the majority had crossed the magic bridge to their great delight and gain. While there they spoke to the natives of the joys and glories of their own land, of the loss they sustained by not overcoming their reluctance to speak the word that gave entrance to enchantment they knew not of. But "Duo" was a word they would die rather than utter. And to justify their action with a semblance of reason they averred that there were no beauties beyond the bridge.

Then arose two men who erected a magic glass that reflected some of the delights of their own land in order to show that they were reality and no myth. They hoped that the sight of so much felicity beyond would lead people on the other side to abandon their insular pride and fear, and so eventually cross the mystic bridge, and see those glories in all their fullness and maturity. Which is an allegory.

Two long-standing friends of Wales, a father and son, C. C. Bell and H. Idris Bell, the latter a learned member of the staff of the British Museum, are responsible for *Welsh Poems in English Verse.** The importance of the work is suitably set forth in the opening of the essay on *The Development of Welsh Poetry* which occupies the closing third of the volume. The essay itself deserves careful perusal and study by those readers, poets and critics who have not yet uttered the cryptic Duo and crossed the magic bridge. Especially would I respectfully commend it to those across the Severn Sea, our brothers and sisters of the New World, and our friends of France and Belgium.

Mr. Bell says . . . "If I append to them [the translations] a general survey of the development of Welsh poetry from its earliest known origins, this calls for a word of explanation. My reason is the amazing ignorance of the subject which prevails in England. I

* "Welsh Poems in English Verse," by H. I. and C. C. Bell. Hughes, Wrexham. Simpkin, Marshall, London. 5s.

must for myself confess that though in blood at least as much Welsh as English, and from my earliest recollection passionately interested in all things Welsh, yet, born and brought up in England, I knew hardly anything of Welsh poetry till I began, at the age of twenty-six, to learn the Welsh language. That Wales possessed an unbroken poetical tradition stretching from before the Norman conquest of England to the present day: that she still had writers producing verse of more than ephemeral merit: that the Eisteddfod was an institution to which real poets sent real poems—of all this I had no inkling. Such ignorance in one interested in Wales is hardly possible to-day when several volumes of translations are available for those who have no Welsh; but even yet, to the ordinary reading public, Welsh literature is an unknown world. I have talked with men of education, poets some of them and keenly interested in foreign literature, who had no idea that Welsh is still a national language and not merely the barbarous *patois* of a few uneducated peasants; who received with amazement and some uncredulity my assertion that poets of unquestionable merit continue to write in the vernacular . . . "

The work of the translators is remarkably well done. The English is chaste, classical, imaginative; while the nuance of the originals is wonderfully preserved and expressed. Space prevents a detailed survey. Let one example serve. It is a sonnet by Parry Williams, who "is, probably, of all the younger generation, the poet who gives most assured promise of future greatness."

THE DRAFT.

Through roll of throbbing kettle-drums you hear
The big drums boom and thud; and as they pass
In the fine flutes the small birds warble clear,
Bees in the bagpipes hum, from throats of brass
The cornets blare, the cymbals clash, and so
Past you with ordered stride the column swings,
Stout sunburnt riflemen, row after row;
To every back its burden closely clings;
Mutely across each shoulder slopes the gun,
Sniffing the battle afar; so, marching by,
Or strong or weak, they vanish every one,
Each with firm step, not asking how or why,
Bound for his destined goal across the wave;
For France or Egypt, Canaan or the grave.

Those who know the beautiful original will appreciate the success of such a rendering.

To those who would see the Welsh language die, so that Welshmen could achieve a seemingly wider culture and economic advantage through the medium of the tongue of Shakespeare Mr. Idris Bell utters these words of wisdom and truth :—

"It might fairly be answered that to exchange the language of Dafydd ap Gwilym, which the Welshman knows and can use to express his inmost soul, for the language of Shakespeare, which is not natural to him, might conceivably prove a disappointing bargain ; but as a matter of fact the choice is hardly as stated. In nine cases out of ten the Welshman who loses his Welsh will probably not exchange it for the language of Shakespeare at all. What he will get in exchange will be not the language of Shakespeare but the language of the *Daily Mail* : not the poetry of Milton and Shelley, but the faded inanities of the London music-halls ; not the fine flower of cosmopolitan culture, but the brainless, heartless, hopeless vacuity of English suburbia—an exchange, like that of Glaucus in the Iliad :—

χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι' ἐννεαβοίων."

The book is a treasure house for critics, poets, and all lovers of fine literature.

LEWIS DAVIES, B.A.
[LEWYS GLYN CYNON.]

NEW YORK

(Inspired by the *Thou Art Not* sonnet submitted in the City Sonnet Contest.)

THOU art not London. I am sure of that.
Thou are not Rome, which is in Italy ;
Thou art not Hoorn beside the Zuyder Zee,
Not Trebizond, quite close to Ararat.
Thou art not Wadan, in Sahara flat ;
Thou art not Keokuk nor Kankakee ;
Nor yet St. Augustine, nor Kissimee,
Nor Boma, where the Congo dames wax fat.

Thou art no town beginning with an A,
A B, a C, a D, an E, an F ;
Thou art not found near Dublin town nor Cork,
Nor on the Equator, nor by Baffin's Bay ;
Thou art—and hark it, if you be not deaf—
Thou art, and wast, and wilt be, old New York !

CLEMENT WOOD.

SOME SPANISH POETS OF THE XIX CENTURY

ESPRONCEDA. I.

FOR over 400 years Spanish literature, and more particularly Spanish poetry, had flowered with increasing beauty and luxuriance. With Calderon, poetry died, or seemed to die. The causes are not far to seek. History, biography and literature are an indissoluble trinity. The history of Spain during her period of decay; the character of the kings and ministers who brought her to ruin and degradation—these explain the dark night of her literature.

The royal support of letters, once a national honour, had degenerated into a capricious patronage, freely bestowed upon the men who fell from independent loyalty to ignoble sycophancy. Calderon himself was not exempt from the prevailing vice. There is more flattery than poetry and more sycophancy than truth in his fulsome praise of the "fair prince of the Asturias," the "planet-king," in the poet's phrases,—Philip IV, who, according to Calderon,

> . . . with arquebuse could cover
> Everything that flew or ran.
> With the pencil he appeareth
> Wondrous nature's new creator,
> And in melody his skill
> Music's inmost soul has reached to;
> In a word, of all the arts
> There are none of which he knows not,
> And supreme perfection reaches
> Without lengthened toil or effort.
>
> (*Tr.* D. F. McCarthy.)

One of the most distinguished living Spanish poets, Manuel Machado, takes a different view of the planet-king. Here is his etching:

> Philip IV
> Was never one more courtly or more nice
> Than our King Philip, whom may God protect,
> Always in black he was habited, point-device.

Pallid his face as the evening sky's aspéct,
His waving hair with gold was tinted faint,
The blue of his eyes one scarcely might detect.

On his patrician breast no jewel quaint,
No dangling chain or any ornament
The velvet of the black expanse might taint.

Its sovereignty no royal sceptre lent,
The strength of his delicate, white hand, azure-veined,
With the weight of the royal yellow glove was spent.
(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

This dilettante king did, it is true, give his personal encouragement to the men of letters attached to the court, but a great literature requires national as well as royal support, and it is a truth never very patent to kings that all national greatness rests ultimately upon national character. Philip IV, like many other monarchs, expected to enjoy all the privileges of royalty without accepting any of its obligations. One is glad to know that at the close of his life he realised his own share in the downfall of his country, beloved though betrayed. What calamities his unhappy reign showed! The loss of Jamaica to England; the loss of Portugal as part of the Spanish empire; internal rebellions; the crushing of the people by unendurable taxation; and more serious still, the beginning of that widespread emigration which threatened to depopulate Spain. One passes as briefly as possible over these sad years—their history can be read elsewhere. One can understand the grief and shame of a proud country overrun by Napoleon's legions; one can dimly imagine the universal confusion and terror which forced whole communities into exile. What concerns us is the fact that two marked changes in the national literature sprang from these desperate times. In the first place, the harsh realities of life forced themselves upon Spanish writers, and Spanish poets began to see, as those of other and happier countries had long since learned, that "poetry is not divorced from life."

In the second place, the exiled men of letters, who returned to their beloved land as soon as it was possible to do so, brought back with them foreign ideas, foreign points of view, foreign literary forms.

From the return of the exiles, if one may thus loosely characterise the period, Spanish poetry left the realm of pure imagination which had for so long been its *habitat*, and emerged into the wide field of humanity. All that pertains to man and the life of man became its province, and a new school of poetry was born.

Three poets bridge the gulf between the death of Calderon and the beginning of the nineteenth century: Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (1737–1780), Manuel José Quintana (1772–1857), and the Duque de Rivas (1791–1865). Quintana is the best known of the three through his *Odes to Emancipated Spain*, published in 1808, at the beginning of the great revolution, which was so vital a turning point in Spanish history. This year (1808) marks also the new era in Spanish poetry, for with the revolution was born the great Spanish poet, José de Espronceda (1808–1842).

His father, Lieut.-Colonel Juan de Espronceda, of a Bourbon cavalry regiment, was forced to leave his home, owing to the outbreak at Aranjuez, and go, with his wife, to Badajoz. During the journey a son was born—in a shepherd's hut, tradition says—and was baptised the same day at Villafranca—according to some biographers, at Almendralejo—de los Barros.

It is not surprising that the boy was a rebel from his childhood. He was scarcely fourteen years of age when he founded amongst his schoolfellows a secret society called the *Numantinos*. Numancia was a Spanish town which was besieged during the wars against the Romans. The inhabitants, determined not to surrender, after first putting their women to death, rushed upon the Roman swords, and perished, every man. Young Espronceda and his comrades, as *Numantinos*, were prepared to sacrifice their brief lives in defence of liberty and for the welfare, as they interpreted it, of their country. They did not

hesitate to contemplate regicide; they did not flinch at the prospect of the scaffold. José had actually been under fire the previous year, and had helped the national militia to put down an Absolutist rising in Madrid.

Unfortunately, the Spanish Government did not appreciate the noble aims of the Numantinos. The school (kept by Alberto Lista, himself a poet of parts and a faithful friend and lifelong admirer of his intrepid pupil Espronceda) was peremptorily closed.

Discretion sent Espronceda to Gibraltar and thence to Lisbon. There his fame was born, for there he first met Teresa Mancha, a girl of fifteen (José was then eighteen), and a mutual passion ensued which was at once his glory, grief and shame. Shortly after their first meeting, Teresa's father was exiled, and she accompanied him to London. Two years later Espronceda followed them, and his passion was intensified by finding the girl married to a husband of her father's choosing. Before long Teresa left her husband and fled with Espronceda to Paris. The young Spanish rebel cast in his lot with the French revolutionaries and fought on the barricades during July, 1830. He tried, unsuccessfully, to foment an insurrection in Navarre; he joined the force for the relief of Poland. He was always lover, rebel and patriot, of an incalculable and lovable personality.

The amnesty of 1833 allowed him to return to Spain, with Teresa. Family influence secured his appointment as an officer of the Guard, but he was rash enough to write some satirical verses and read them at a banquet, with consequences which might have been expected. He was deprived of his rank, and again exiled. He returned presently to Madrid, became a journalist and advocated insurrection, a republic—anything wild and lawless appealed to him. He fought in the streets of Madrid—much more to his taste than the life of a guardsman.

Meantime, he and Teresa had begun to quarrel. In 1836 they parted, and three years later she died. In 1841, Espronceda was appointed Secretary of Embassy at The Hague, but he soon came back to Madrid, and was elected

deputy for Almeria. By now his wild heart was worn out with love and revolt, and, as often happens before the end, a vista of quiet and secure happiness opened before him. He became engaged to Señorita Bernarda de Berueta, a charming lady, and the solacing love of a wife seemed about to replace the stormy violence of his early *liaisons*.

In twelve months he was in his grave, unwedded, untamed. The beautiful part of the story is the devotion of his betrothed to his memory. All her life she wore mourning for Espronceda, as if she had indeed been his widow, and every day she went to the cemetery and laid fresh flowers upon her poet's grave. There are few instances of more enduring constancy.

Espronceda died in Madrid, on May 23rd, 1842, at the early age of 33, after four days' illness. The funeral honours paid to him equalled those bestowed upon Lope de Vega and Calderon. A great procession, representing literature, drama, the government, the army, the Church, and including all the distinguished men of the day, followed the funeral car. It was headed by the President of the Cortes and the Patriarch of the Indies (an uncle of Espronceda), and was accompanied by bands of the National Guard, who played funeral marches. Before consigning the coffin to its last resting-place in the cemetery of San Nicolás, the senators who were the pall-bearers, paused at the unpretending building where the ashes of Calderon are preserved in an urn. Here the casket was opened, and Señor Marraci, taking one of the laurel wreaths from the urn, declared that he dedicated that sacred laurel to José de Espronceda, "until time should give a lasting crown to his eternal memory."

When this impressive ceremony was concluded, the coffin was borne to the grave, and there, after the last offices for the dead had been said, friends of the poet paid him the tribute of their sincere eulogies. Finally, a brother-poet, Señor Don Enrique Gil, read with deep emotion a moving elegy of which the closing lines are as follows :

Farewell, farewell! The shining gate
Of heaven open wide is thrown;
Thy coming love divine doth wait;
Thou goest where in holy state
Dwell glorified, immaculate,
Cervantes, Lope, Calderon.

Only six months before his own death, Espronceda had followed the remains of the patriot, Guardia, to this same cemetery, and had read a beautiful sonnet which he had written for the occasion. Some of the lines are equally applicable to the poet as to the hero he praised. One recalls Lope de Vega's last sonnet, which his son-in-law and editor calls his own epitaph, as much as that of the Portuguese poet to whom it was addressed, and one is impressed anew with the continuity of resemblance in the lives as in the works of the great Spanish writers.

TO GUARDIA.

Thou star of liberty, shining so bright
Spain's glory fairer in thy ray appears,
Who from earth's transitory hopes and fears
To a celestial home hast winged thy flight;

Look down on us, who weep in sorrow's night;
To thee we give the tribute of our tears,
To thee, who shalt live through the eternal years,
Shield of Madrid, her honour and delight.

O Guardia, rest in peace, for tyranny
In that immortal combat vanquished fell,
And valiant deeds like thine we fain would show;

Rest! Let the wicked quail! Thy requiem be
The people's grief. Where heroes' graves up-swell,
Watered by humble tears, do laurels grow.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

A great poet, a great man, a great friend. Martinez Sierra says of him: "As patriot, the pen, the sword and the tongue of Espronceda were always united in defence of the interests and rights of the people. As a man, a sincere friend, always frank, always generous, he captivated

all hearts, and those who were his friends loved him with enthusiasm." And again, Sierra, with deep insight, writes: "To suffer is to live. When sorrow speaks all tongues are silenced, and he who has not suffered, what does he know?" Espronceda said of himself:

> I am stubborn; by caprice my fancy's caught,
> To rhyme or rhythm I never give a thought;
> Without or rule or compass sings my lyre,
> The flames of my burning heart my songs inspire.

Sierra, perhaps with these lines in his mind, cries: "Emotion! Glory and soul of poetry, unique explanation of life!"

Espronceda is distinctly one of the great emotional poets of the world. His every stanza, every line, every word is a blazing coal of fire. Théophile Gautier speaks of his "wild and passionate energy." The phrase is perfect, but the Spanish poet adds to this a poignant tenderness, and a beauty that is more than mortal. Reading his poems, one is struck by his inexhaustible wealth of ideas; his extraordinary mastery of poetical form; his wonderful potency of phrase; his exact choice of words; the music of his cadences; the effortless ease of his versification. One finds few involved phrases, still fewer forced rhymes. What he says flows in a direct, limpid stream; the whole rich, beautiful Spanish language leaps to serve him.

I am intentionally avoiding controversial criticism in these articles. I choose, for the moment, to point out, so far as is possible, the merits of the poets whose work I am considering, leaving each reader to criticise for himself. It is a choice between construction and disintegration. I must, however, refer briefly to the charge so widely brought against Espronceda—his imitation of Byron, by whom he was, of course, greatly influenced. But did not all the romantic poets of his time fall under Byron's influence? He was a guide to Espronceda, not an obsession. Quite apart from imitation, the character of the Englishman and the Spaniard had much in common. Everything

with both was a passion—love of women, love of country, hatred of injustice, hatred of ignorance. Both wrote much of their poetry in the *ottava rima*. Byron borrowed it from the Italian ; why not Espronceda ? Byron popularised the form in England ; it had long been in vogue in Spain, whose poets, since Garcilasso, had made frequent use of it.

El estudiante de Salamanca ("The Student of Salamanca") is said to bear a strong resemblance to *Don Juan*. The subject of both poems is an old legend which has been used by many writers. Given an identical subject, an identical poetic form, one may, perhaps, find an excuse for superficial resemblances. Even those critics who begin by emphasising Espronceda's indebtedness to Byron end by acknowledging the greater power of the Spanish poet. There is a subtle kinship between the Spanish poets and our own. Espronceda might have written Masefield's lines :

> O beauty, I have wandered far ;
> Peace, I have suffered, seeking thee ;
> Life, I have sought to see thy star
> That other men might see.

And that sad, unhonoured, great poet, John Davidson, described the vivid power of Espronceda in those lines of pure beauty :

> That minister of ministers,
> Imagination, gathers up
> The undiscovered universe
> Like jewels in a jasper cup.

Espronceda was warmly appreciated by his friends. A very interpretative estimate of the poet is found in Señor Garcia de Villata's preface to the 1840 edition of the *Poesias* :

"Each poem of Espronceda," he says, "is a revelation ; each stanza a frame in which he has depicted nature with so much truth that we see everything fecund, alive and in motion, both in the world of ideals and in that of the physical senses ; we are shown, moreover, under the brush of the artist, new forms, new beauties, new harmonies . . ."

Espronceda was eighteen when he wrote his earliest poem, of which only fragments remain, for the work was projected on an immense scale and was never finished by its author. *Pelayo*, whose name is the title of the poem, was the Spanish hero whose early repulse of the Moors led, after many years of warfare, to their final overthrow and the triumph of the cross over the crescent. The poem is written in the *ottava rima* of which Espronceda was even then a master, and contains many passages of beauty and of power. I translate at random :

FIRST FRAGMENT (18)

The budding flower opens her lovely breast
To the sun's warm and fertilising ray ;
Then her rich fragrance on the emerald crest
On every hill she pours, the joy of May.
The murmuring brook upon its secret quest
For her embrace, pursues its serene way,
While she, with vivid blushes overspread,
Bends to the gentle kiss her gentle head.

THIRD FRAGMENT (10)

Night her dark mantle throws upon the sky
Like an obscuring cowl ; sharp lightnings flare,
And the stark horror of the night defy,
While from the outposts, on the silent air
Vibrates the distant, solitary cry
Of the lone sentry, keeping vigil there ;
And piercing through the awe-inspiring gloom,
A thousand fearful spectres grimly loom.

(17)

Swiftly to horse the eager Moormen spring,
Their shining lances in the rest they set,
While their barbaric shouts of battle ring
As in formation close their legions get ;
The horrid clash, the noises menacing,
With the deep rolling of the drums are met ;
The leaping steel gleams, sparkling, far and wide,
Red blood in torrents flows on every side.

(19)

Man upon man his frantic fury wreaks,
And endless blows on heavy blows descend ;
Destruction ever for fresh victims seeks,
Furious, they make a breach, they tear, they rend ;
Arms, corpses, horses, chariots, with hideous shrieks
Into a trampled chaos swift they blend ;
Helmets and turbans, lances and hot blood
Envelop Guardalete in a flood.

In another vein is the description of the seraglio of the Moorish king.

FIFTH FRAGMENT (3)

A hundred silver lamps their radiance blent,
Illumining with splendour the hareem,
And from the piercèd floor delicious scent
Rose, overflowing in a fragrant stream.
The lights, in gold and alabaster pent,
Reflected, each, a hundredfold its gleam ;
The glittering crystal, and quicksilver bright,
Bubbled in jasper fountains, exquisite.

(4)

Here there was seen a lovely Moorish girl,
Upon a couch with flowery silk arrayed
Luxuriously stretched, her limbs a-curl,
Love to love calling from her dark eyes' shade.
And there another houri, rose and pearl,
In rippling waters, where rich odours played,
Her raven tresses delicately laved,
That in thick curls upon her shoulders waved.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Pelayo is chiefly interesting as an early work showing the qualities which were afterward enlarged and perfected. Here one finds the beauty of phrase to which, in later poems, was added beauty of thought ; and glowing pictures which were to develop into transcendent imagery. We need not accept the *dictum* of an ardent friend of the poet, who declared that *Pelayo* entitled Espronceda to a place beside Homer, but the poem is not entirely without value, and is

of real interest. Espronceda went to London in 1827, and there he wrote his well-known and noble elegy *A la patria*. I select three striking stanzas:

Once Spain was Spain; heroes she bred,
They numbered many a score,
And all the nations looked on her with dread,
In the brave days of yore.

. . . . .

As in the desert lies a stone,
To-day she prostrate lies,
And those who love her, sadly fare alone
Under far alien skies.

. . . . .

Exiles, O God! we face the years,
Our hearts with grief o'erflow;
And who shall dry, O Spain, thy bitter tears?
Who shall assuage thy woe?

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The poem is very long, but it is of a sustained beauty and power. One must place beside it the well-known *Guerra* ("War"), which I give in full:

Hark! 'Tis the cannon! From my breast is torn
The song of war; vehemently it rings;
Above the clamour of the guns 'tis borne,
The poet strikes his lyre's exultant strings.

Look where the people lift their heads once more
Proudly above the dust wherein they lay;
Omnipotent, and valorous as of yore,
Insolent tyranny is their trembling prey.

I hear the murmur of voices,
And in the air I see the shining of swords,
And banners are unfurled;
The sound reverberates in echoing chords
From the peaks of the Pyrenees;
Quiver the mighty walls
That guard the treasures of opulent Cadiz.
Burns in each breast the conqueror's desire,
Glows in each face the warrior's ecstasy,
And everywhere the shout, higher and higher,
Thunders to heaven: "Our land and liberty!"

Comrades, our country calls ;
Onward, on to the fight,
Waving our weapons bright,
With ardent chivalry !
Let our victorious arms
Sing of our country's fame,
And to the world proclaim
Spain is already free.

Look, look, how in crimson blood
And tears of sorrow dyed,
The murderers deride
Our country's bitter woe !
O may the fearful strife
End only with their death,
And may hate's burning breath
Inflame each patriot's blow.

O country ever dear,
Dear to the noble mind !
O magic undefined
In liberty that dwells !
Illumes the pennons proud,
By Spanish hands held high,
A rainbow from the sky
That final peace foretells.

Over the tumult wild,
Over the guns' harsh noise,
Thy melancholy voice,
O Spain, the din doth pierce ;
And at the cry our souls
Are filled with rapture strong ;
Thy name the impious throng
Inspires with terror fierce.

O comrades, is there one
To whom there never comes
With the beating of the drums
A great joy in the heart ?
Look how they gleam afar,
Heralds of high renown,
Reflecting victory's crown—
The sparks from our steel that dart.

To arms! To arms! Death to the Carlists, death!
Let flow to the deep sea in dreadful course
Great rivers of the blood of the infidel!
The breast of ocean shall in wonder swell
To see its waves assailed by such a flood,
To see itself dyed red with traitors' blood.

Let the cannon roar! Let the people sing aloud
The song of war! Let joy be manifest!
See, Liberty e'en now from heaven has bowed
To break the fetters of our land opprest.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

ELLA CROSBY-HEATH.

THE POE COTTAGE POETRY CONTEST

EDWIN MARKHAM, dean of American poets, has been declared the winner of the Poe Poem Contest for the $200.00 prize offered through THE POETRY REVIEW by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mrs. Charles D. Dickey, Mrs. Percy Stewart and Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, who as the Poe Cottage Committee are raising funds with which to secure in perpetuity the care and maintainance of the Poe Cottage, at Fordham Road, New York, to perpetuate the memory of Edgar Allan Poe. The judges who made the final selection were Mr. Alfred Noyes, Mr. Robert Bridge, editor of *Scribner's Magazine*, Mr. William Seaver Woods, editor of the *Literary Digest*, Glenn Frank, editor of the *Century Magazine*, Dr. W. Gilman Thompson, Dr. John H. Finlay, Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, American Section editor of THE POETRY REVIEW, and Mr. Galloway Kyle, the general editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

John J. Chapman, whose fine appreciations of Poe's genius have done so much to remind the present generation of the " soul enchanted by melody of song," was placed second.

Other distinguished contributors were Miss Jane Prothero Nott, of Bristol, England; Miss Evelyn Watson, of Buffalo, N.Y.; R. Dunridge Baldwin, of Paris, France; Benjamin Collins Woodbury, of Boston, Mass., and not less than two hundred more of the entries, which came from every part of the world, were exceptional contributions. The first poem, and its nearest rivals, are printed elsewhere in this issue. All the poems entered in the contest will be kept in the Poe Cottage hereafter, the names of all the entrants being inscribed in the Poe Record Book.

STRATFORD SKETCHES

1.

TWO in the hedgerow, busking and clipping,
Lambs in the meadow, frisking and tripping,
Two in the hedgerow, and a warm sun high
Laughing madness on them from a summer sky.

Birds in the branches twitting: "Look la, peep!"
Clouds shifting patterns on the distant sheep;
There the road to London town, and here by the edge
Jolly Jean and Jerry clipping in the hedge.

2.

When prudent John doth brew the ale,
(Night, and the north wind in the rafter!)
The good wife drowses with book on knee,
The draughty fire roars lustily.
And dreaming Jack in his crib goes pale.
(Snow, and a bleak wind in the rafter!)

(Heigho, and the wind in the rafter!)
Now prudent John doth brew the ale,
He has captured beauty and warmth enough
In the merry cheer of the good, brown stuff
To make December melt in laughter,
And the ruddiest wind of the north grow pale!

WADE OLIVER.

MISS FRANCES ISABELLA GORDON

(Sir J. Reynolds's "Heads of Angels")

O Baby angel
With the chubby face,
Blue eyes and rosebud mouth
And curls of gold,
Wee snowy wings
And quaintly childish grace,
I'm glad for my sake, dear,
You can't grow old.

HUGH FLEMING.

EXCEEDING beauty of thought and delicacy of expression run throughout *The Shepherd of Eternity*, by Eva Gore-Booth (Longmans). The subject of all the poems is founded in her religious faith, but she has woven into her verses a fine thread of originality and vision, and a tender playfulness that the saints of old were in the habit of using. The *Prayer for Donkeys* is entirely simple in workmanship, which the more reveals the real poetic idea, and this uplifted vision flashes through *Eden and Gethsemane*. One line, to take no more, in this latter, "Then the mobs of queer-faced pansies began to laugh and run," indicates the freedom and what one might call the naïve subtlety of her work. The mind of the authoress seems to abide "in that visionary May" of poets.

Of the long and painstaking work of *The Rose of India* (B. Blackwell) what can be said? It deals with the legend or, as the author would have us believe, the true story of Thomas Didymus in India, but the author's addition of the love of the saint for Mary Magdalene is a somewhat repellant freak of imagination, whilst his obvious solemnity has forced the lines perilously near to a mere ten-syllabled prose, as witness the following taken at random:

> "Long while in either balance we have weighed
> All arguments and reasons, setting one
> Against another."

—it only lacks a table to make it a board meeting; and then sometimes we are brought to smile where no smile was intended, as when the Brahmin priest urges that Thomas and his disciple

> ". . . must be flayed alive,
> Then burnt to ashes in the market-place,"

and the king replies:

> "In truth, thy counsel, Brahmin, likes me not,
> Methinks it verges on severity."

"Verges" is delicious. To us also it seems a *leetle* lacking in urbanity.

The poems of H. V. Marrot bear an infelicitous title. *Littered Spaces* (Elkin Mathews) wickedly suggest the thought that an entirely blank page may at times be more pleasing than when it is printed with laments for love misplaced or love misprized. But the short elegy, "She did not like the dark, she said," is poetry of the delicate peach-blossom kind; on the other hand, how laboured is this:

> "And all the soft rich lines of poplars and willows,
> Now sunlit, sweeping the sky in plumes and billows,
> Now brooding so elegantly on the sunless grass,"

and what a disturbing adverb is elegantly in this juxtaposition! The infelicitous title is taken from Hardy, whose use of it fitly completes his picture of the blankness of a street. H. V. Marrot introduces it less happily in a sonnet called *Westminster Abbey*. The author here, in a perhaps justifiable rancour, exclaims on the "Victorian statesmen's comic effigies" (for ourselves, however, these effigies would be less oppressive if they were indeed comic and not so ponderously solemn), and then there comes this over-heavy line, "And God seems very far from the littered spaces." It would be unkind to hint that the gods do seem rather far from *Littered Spaces*.

Honor Leeke writes her Nature poems (*A Cloud of Singing Things*, Erskine Macdonald) in a dewy freshness of spirit and with quaint airy fancy. One on the green grass and the "solemn crow, vested in decent black" is particularly charming, also the *Spring Morning*, and *The Willow Grove*. It may be that she is somewhat ensnared by the device of repeating lines. This gives a musical effect, but is apt to indicate paucity of ideas. In "Ye merchants come from lands afar," which appears to be thirteen lines there are as a fact only eight, the total is arrived at by repetition, and this is the case with several others. Then the old-fashioned method of spelling and pronunciation that she has adopted in fifteen poems out of the thirty-five seems an unnecessary way of attracting attention. The authoress surely would not consider she found greater cleanliness in the old "hip" bath than when using the modern bath-room. Clarity of thought can be as well expressed in the language of our own day as in archaic modes, and quite as beautifully; a poet does not need to be clad as a troubadour or as a "ladie milde" to prove a singer; *Ye Sparrows* would have been as delightful and delicate if written in the English that we speak nowadays, though it might have troubled the authoress a little to bring "Birdës of Paradise" into the adequate measure. The book comes to us with an introduction by Dr. Oliver C. de Ellis, and, in spite of a real respect for a discriminating critic's judgment, Dr. Ellis discloses the weak spot in Honor Leeke's poetic armour in his quotations from her letters. Undoubtedly a poet should be happy, but as undoubtedly there must also be the piercing of the heart, for "from spear and thorn alone May be grown For the front of saint or singer any divinzing twine." No great enduring work has ever sprung from merely being "idle, and exceedingly happy," nor yet out of a dislike to the "beastly little red houses" of Surrey, and Honor Leeke is too truly a poet not to aim at strong enduring work.

ARTHUR HOOD.

HUGO VON HOFFMANNSTHAL.

THE visit of Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, the Austrian poet and mystic, to London has aroused great interest and has inspired "Helen Reedly" to provide us with a few faithful translations—not free "versions"—as examples of the work of one who has been described as "the greatest German poet since Goethe," "the profoundest philosophic post in Europe." He is a lyrical poet who has become a dramatist. His one-act plays are full of imagery; the souls of the characters are laid bare. These and his longer plays, which are as yet unwedded to the music of Strauss, remain almost unknown in England. Hoffmannsthal told an American admirer some years ago that he wrote for about 500 persons, and not a few of these 500—judging from the books that have been written about him—are very fervent champions. They have explained, for example, that when he celebrates the loveliness of music and algebra he is on the same track as the philosopher Novalis, who maintained that the most exalted thing in life is religion.

Hoffmannsthal is known in England as the librettist-partner of Richard Strauss in *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Elektra*, the former of which is the most notable success of the opera season at Covent Garden; but it is certain that, apart from the veterans Gerhardt Hauptmann and Arthur Schnitzler, he is the greatest contemporary playwright writing in the German language.

The Brave Outlook of Youth.

"I have closely observed," Herr von Hoffmannsthal told a correspondent, "a creative impulse among the youth of Austria and Germany which is likely to produce a different and more spiritualised philosophy of living. And now I find the same irresistible impulse among the youth of England. There have been signs that it is awake in Italy as well, though I have no evidence that it is present in France. I do not necessarily mean those who fought, suffered and grew weary in the war. The orientation I have in mind is more urgently demanding expression through the still younger men and women, or boys and girls, of between adolescence and the middle twenties.

"It is rather indefinite at present, this unescapable search for yet another form of the Grail, for, like all deep realities, it forms a vague grouping of insistent ideas. It rejects a great deal of traditionalism, but yet demands stable foundations upon which to begin to build a structure that will endure as other structures of religion and humanistic philosophy have endured. It is mainly masculine in origin, but it has very many feminine adherents.

"At the moment it is a religious urge without a set creed. It

has in it some of the finer aspiration of the original Christianity, some of the unflinching honesty of undiluted paganism, an essential love of mankind, and a belief that the times and their trend need a new framework for old realities. I have expressed much of what I mean in my new play *The Tower*, which Reinhardt will produce next year in Berlin.

"We shall see tremendous new forces in this century. Meanwhile the youth of to-day has already learned that the extremes of revolution and rashness do not serve the aims which it is driven to try to realise.

"While the post-war pleasuremongers were chasing their own tails, the students in my country were carrying coals and doing other manual labour to keep themselves alive during their education.

"That generation has now completed its education, or soon will have, so far as the schools and universities are concerned, and it is at closer grips with life. Its spiritual muscles are hardened by the earlier coal-heaving, and soon we shall be watching the mightiness of its later and more earnest tussle."

Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, who was born in Vienna in 1874, had his collected poems published in 1907. Hans Bethge, the poet, says of him: "His verse is highly cultured; the language finest where it flows simpliest; not seldom it is precious." If we compare Hoffmannsthal's poetry to flowers it will be too strong and strangely smelling hyacinths or even to orchids under the ghostly light of the moon. He is more akin to the Latin than to the German spirit and the scene of most of his dramas is laid in Italy. His lyrics are permeated by a lofty melancholy, wonder at the mysterious life of man, the change and transitoriness of all things.

BALLADE OF THE OUTWARD LIFE.

And babes grow up—babes with their eyes profound
Which know not anything—grow up and die
And all the sons of men pursue their way.

And sweet fruits wax from sour continually
And drop at night like dead birds, from the spray
And lie, and rot ere many days go by.
Still blows the wind; again and yet again
We hear and utter many words; are ware
Both of our body's pleasure and its pains.
Roads run athwart the grass and here and there
Are places full of torches, fountains, trees,
And others threatful, parched to death and bare . . . .

What were these made for and not one of these
Another's double ? And why thus numberless ?
What intermingles laughs and agonies ?
What boots it all ? How serves this sport to bless
Us who are great and wander evermore
Without a goal in lasting loneliness ?
In oft-seen sight of such what vantage dwells ?
And yet he sayeth much who " Evening " saith,
A word from which deep thought and sadness pour
Like honey heavily from hollow cells.

" TERZINEN."

" Such stuff as dreams are made on," such as these
We are : and dreams awake and open eyes
Like little children under cherry trees,

From out whose crown the orbèd moon doth rise
Through the great night his pale-gold course to take.
Our dreams emerge in us not otherwise,

Are there and live, like laughing children, break
On us, no smaller up-and-downward hieing,
Than orbèd moon doth from the tree-tops wake.

The innermost is open to their plying
Like spirit hands in a barred room they seem
To weave in us and have a life undying

And three are one, a man, a thing, a dream.

FROM *THE ADVENTURER AND THE SINGER.*

The Baron: " . . . . I will have revels here ; procure me
Lions disgorging nosegays from their gullets,
And set me gilded dolphins at the gates
Spouting red wine into the emerald water,
Not three, not five, ten servants go and hire me
And dress them in my livery—by the steps
Three gondolas shall wait full of musicians
Wearing my colours.
I'll lap the Campanile round and round
With roses and narcissus : up above there
Upon its topmost pinnacle shall flames
Of sandalwood nourished with oil of roses

Embrace Night's body with a giant's arms.
I'll make of the Canal a flowing fire,
Strew such a heap of flowers that all the doves
Fall stupefied to earth : so many torches
I will illume that fish for fear shall burrow
Into the ocean's bottom and Europa
Affrighted, with her naked nymphs shall hide
In a still darker chamber and her ox
Shall bellow loud, be dazzled. And I will
Turn poet's dreams to truth, shock from the grave
The Veronese and the Aretine,
Harness old men, build up a pyramid
Of bodies, bodies of young girls that sing,
I swear the horses of St. Mark shall whinny
And puff their brazen nostrils out for pleasure.
They who lie up there in the leaden chambers
Digging their nails into the walls, shall stop
And think the last day come, and that the angels
With the wild perfume of their wings, rose-handed,
Are plunging down and tearing from above them
Their leaden roof and substituting heaven."

* * * *

In the course of a very attractive address on Lilting Measures in English Poetry at the Poetry Society's Monday afternoon readings at the Savoy Chapel, Mr. J. C. Stobart, the Director of Education attached to the British Broadcasting Company, said that poetry was an essential ingredient of civilisation. An intelligent man could think for himself, but he wanted a poet to feel and see for him. The ludicrous error was commonly held that poetry is composed of softness and sentiment was due to faulty education. Teachers had become accustomed to ignoring the vital factor of rhythm. To restore poetry to its proper place as the queen of the arts it was essential that rhythm, as the life-blood and pulse of poetry, should be recognised in the reading of it, and that children as well as poets should be allowed to discern and pay regard to the rhythm which consists of the artistic development of a pattern. It is essential that poetry, which is too often regarded as a dull thing, should be known as a gay, lilting and joyous matter. The dismal notion of poetry should be attacked, as well as the idea that it can be the perquisite of a clique. There is too little lilt and cadence in modern work, some prosaic examples of which Mr. Stobart read in contrast with the measures of Chaucer, of the Elizabethans and the Victorians.

SONNETS ON ILLUSION.

A New Premium Contest.

THE proneness on the part of philosophers from Aristotle and Plato to Ibsen and Santayana to regard life, as we live it, as an illusion, is to be put to a world-wide test is an intriguing subject which has inspired a new sonnet contest, for which a prize of $50.00 (£10) has been offered by Mrs. Paul DeBlois Laighton, of New York City.

The contest originated in a discussion of Ibsen's "Wild Duck" at the Park Lane, New York, headquarters (American) of The Poetry Society and the American office of The Poetry Review. It will be remembered that one of Ibsen's characters, Dr. Relling says:

"Rob the average man of his life-illusion and you rob him of his happiness at the same stroke."

"Life-illusion?" queries another character.

"Yes," answers Relling, "I said illusion. For illusion, you know, is the stimulating principle."

This reminded one of those present that Santayana states that: We mistake what is happening for reality when it is only illusion. Yet when a man knows that everything that happens is illusion, then only does he begin to understand and appreciate life.

Somebody pointed out that Napoleon said: "Imagination rules the world" and that it is hard to say where imagination ends and illusion begins! Someone else remembered that Emerson said: "Science does not know its debt to imagination," and a scientist present stated that all great inventions were considered illusions until demonstrated, and Joseph Auslander reminded us that Goethe declared "all great art gives us the illusion of a higher reality."

But are the illusions of to-day the same as the illusions that stirred the ancients? was the next query. Would it be not worth while finding out what the world to-day, our generation, thinks on the subject? What was the best procedure to find this out? Certainly not by having a volume from each of the philosophers on the subject! Could they not be limited to a given number of lines?

Mrs. Bartlett stated that the fourteen lines of the sonnet were ample to express one's opinion poetically about *illusion*—and pointed out that by limiting the poets to the fourteen lines of a sonnet in the Bartlett Sea-Sonnet Contest had brought over eight hundred extraordinary poetic expressions of our understanding of the sea, its attraction and its influence, one hundred and twenty-five of which have recently been published in the Sea Anthology.

"If you write a sonnet on illusion I'll offer a prize for a contest" was Mrs. Laighton's offer to Mrs. Bartlett. Within twenty-four hours the sonnet was written and the prize on offer.

Mrs. Bartlett's sonnet follows.

Is it too late to sit at thy charmed feet,
Enchantress of our youth and of our age. . . .
Is there, then, more than thou, a greater sage ?
(The hours we spend with thee are fair and fleet)
Art thou a dream, a vision or complete
Embodiment of truth, illumining life's page,
Or, challenge that some fate has willed to wage
In giving each his portion harsh or sweet ?

It matters not thy country or thy kin,
The winds of progress blow about thy shrine,
'Tis thou who helps the breathless loser *win*,
Thine animating force makes all things shine,
Thou art the light which burns through life, within,
Illusion, illusion, sorceress divine !

The Laighton Contest for the best three sonnets on Illusion is to be open until December 15th, 1925, to give time to the hundreds of poets of the forty-two countries who competed for the six international poetry contests held during the past two years to enter for this new premium. All competitors must be members of the Poetry Society or annual postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

The prizes will be :—First, $25 ; second, $15 ; third, $10. Entries should be sent, as before, to Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, American Editor, POETRY REVIEW, 299 Park Avenue, New York.

* * * *

Apropos Mr. Steese's well-informed article in this issue, our American Editor and representative on the General Council of The Poetry Society reports that she has received on behalf of the Society and the Review numerous congratulations on account of Mr. Stillman's offer of a Chair of Poetry at Harvard, for which " the combination of the Society's world-wide influence and the Review's leadership, marking a new era in the politics of poetry, are held to be responsible." It is gratifying to know, too, that the great American newspapers are now treating poetry as a matter of everyday concern and noting its influence on individual and social and intellectual life. They welcome and broadcast our announcements, especially the details and results of our international verse contests, which through the instrumentality of Mrs. Bartlett are being continued and extended. Her " Dynamics " series, which will be resumed in our next issue, are being widely commented on and quoted from and will be published shortly in volume form as an invaluable and unique introduction to the best in American contemporary poetry.

THE PREMIUM AWARD AND CRITICISM

VERY welcome are poems by Honor F. Leeke, Nancy Pollok, Joyce Harrison, Barbara E. Smythe, Vera I. Arlett, Audrey Wrangham and "Victor Ballan," none of which, however, quite overcomes the severe handicap placed on the work of previous recipients of the premium.

Prizeworthy poems have been received from :

Evelyn D. Bangay, A. Doris L. Wilson, Edith M. Walker, Gertrude Pitt and Joy Malden.

I have pored long over these entries, and feel that Miss Wilson deserves the prize undivided. The other four receive book prizes and so do A. E. Mackay and Phyllis Hastings. Also highly commended, but without book prizes, are Bertha Annakin and J. C. Saunders.

The following are commended :

Elsie Harriet Raspin, Helen Derezinska, Wray Hunt, Mildred M. Seahy, Mabel Westby-Nunn, Hilda Hart, A. A. de B., A. E. Riddle, Lilian L. Harper, Alice E. Collinge, Noel Allport.

The criticisms of those six independent lines are very good indeed.

i. Make me Thy bee, dear Lord.

A flat-sounding, flat-footed line. Out of six vowel sounds, three are long *e* s ; and to make bad worse, two come together (I. Marion Soper). The triviality of the sentiment is intensified by the internal rhyme (E. M. Frampton). Others write similarly, "Brown Bracken" criticising by parody in a brilliant epigram :

> Make me Thy bee, dear Lord ; and, to and fro,
> Buzzing about my neighbours I will go,
> Calling from house to house on busy wing,
> Righteous, acquisitive, complete with sting.

ii. I cannot visualise the joys of Heaven.

Joy is an emotion and invisible to the eyes (Nancy Pollok and others ; I do not think this matters much). This construction, which is bound to resolve itself on the word *but*, is too well-worn (E. M. Frampton). *Visualise* is an ugly expression (Mabel Westby-Nunn). "Brown Bracken" parodies this with No. vi (q.v.).

iii. The fury of the storm had passed away.

Not an arresting first line (Mabel Westby-Nunn). Does it mean that the storm had passed away, too ; or did that stay, like the grin of Alice's Cheshire cat ? (Willow Catkin). *Passed* should be

the final word ; then the whole emphasis would fall upon it. *Away* splits up the emphasis, and weakens what has already been fully expressed (I. Marion Soper). Poetry is more successful in painting a landscape if little details are mentioned individually, not generalised into a pale wash (Beech Nut). Here, in the first line, is a culminating thought. The level of the poem must be impossibly high to prevent anticlimax (E. M. Frampton). Ineffective because commonplace (Nancy Pollock). " Brown Bracken " treats this together with No. v (q.v.).

iv. What magic in a garden lies !

A platitude ! Why trouble to write it ? (E. M. Frampton). Been said too often already (Nancy Pollok). What ! Again ? (Willow Catkin). Magic is nothing if not an activity ; it would not *lie* in a garden, though it might *lurk* there (I. Marion Soper). More sententious and didactic generalisation (Beech Nut).

v. Burdened with memories of the days gone by.

A stereotyped phrase like " *the days gone by* " would reduce any line to the commonplace (I. Marion Soper).

> The fury of the storm had passed away—
> By which I mean that it had ceased to rain.
> The skies were blue that formerly were grey
> And someone said " It's clearing up again."
>
> Burdened with memories of the days gone by,
> (Last week)—I smote the weather glass : " And yet
> " I will take my umbrella," murmured I,
> " In case I should get wet."
>
> (BROWN BRACKEN).

vi. Oh to be in Swanage, now that Easter's near.

An ugly, unpardonable parody (E. M. Frampton—and everyone else, too).

> " I cannot visualise the joys of Heaven,
> " Strange though it may appear ;
> " I cannot think why not, for I have striven
> " Extremely hard to do so." " Have you, dear ?
> " Well I should try to visualise those *here* :
> " Just think of Hampstead, now that Whitsun's near."
>
> (BROWN BRACKEN).

Please criticise for next time the following by "Willow Catkin."

We played together, Life serene,
And I, the man, and she, the maid:
I led two hearts, she capped with Queen,
Life played the King, and Death—a spade.

I said to Life: "Your Ace is lost."
He said "'T is Death has thrown away,"
And carelessly the card he tossed
Where still unculled the first trick lay.

With diamonds seven she covered it;
I threw out Clubs and held my breath:
There was a joke too grim for wit—
Seven hearts within the hand of Death!

The maid arose and beckoned me;
Life did but smile: "O younglings rare,
"It were a greater rarity
"If Death played fair."

More books by members of our fellowship have arrived; I am sorry that I have not yet been able to give them the study they merit.

* * * *

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the "highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to The Poetry Review.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," Poetry Review Office, before August 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope.

Group and Individual Awards.

MR. RAWNSLEY'S group prizes—a Luchesi bust of Tennyson, which should be found in all schools and colleges—is awarded to the Bedford High School for a very comprehensive and meritorious collection of poems by girls from 11 to 17. Individual contributors do not reach so high a standard of imagination and execution as some of the Louth girls did, but among the younger group Angelique de Reyghers (11) provides us with more than exercises in verse. In her shorter piece she tells us very succinctly :

> The moon indeed is very old,
> And would have grown quite dirty and grey
> But for the old woman who did what she was told
> And swept the cobwebs away.

Some vivid lines, with moon magic in them, by K. Lucas, begin :

> THE moon is late to-night,
> She is wrapped in her blankets, she will not come,
> And its ever so dark a night.
> The stars shall call and the wind shall call,
> And the hills call and the sea call,
> But she's drowsy, she's drowsy, she will not come,
> And its ever so dark a night.
> The wind shall howl and the sea shall sing,
> Murmuring, murmuring,
> Darkly stealing o'er desolate sands,
> Singing the song that none understands,
> Endlessly breaking.
> The grasses quiver and shiver and sigh
> (For the light of the moon, the moon, the moon),
> And the lambkins huddle together, together,
> Under the sky.

Audrey Bryning (14) introduces a feeling of eeriness into *The Forgotten House*; Janet Urquhart (13), who was specially mentioned in May, is responsible for a delicate lullaby, singing of "moon-freight, rocking with stars in a silver sea," and Erica Everett (14) contributes a metrically sweet and observant spring song.

Of the individual contributors A. C. C. Seligman (Wimbledon), a lad of 15, is the most distinctive with two imagist poems. *Winsford, Somerset*, is the shorter and very modern in manner :

BENEATH an elm
in a freckled glade,
beyond the realm
of plough or spade,
close to the edge
of a leaping brook,
where in the sedge
the crow and rook
do stroll sedate,
or in the arms
of a sturdy oak
their watch alarms
them with a croak,
and in and out
among the reeds,
a merry rout
the reedling leads ;
and now above
my bed I hear
a cushat dove
that knows no fear
beneath the shade
of the tree's green leaves.

These communications are marked by individual book awards.

This Young People's Verse section will be continued from issue to issue until further notice. Mr. Rawnsley authorises us to offer, as a group prize, one of the famous Lucchesi busts of Tennyson for award to the school submitting the best collection of poems by pupils.

The Hon. President also enables us to offer a Tennyson bust for the best selection of essays on Tennyson sent in by any one school. (This competition will be repeated in succeeding issues with different subjects for treatment, but all bearing on appreciation of Tennyson's poems and limited to 1,000 words.)

In addition, the usual book prizes at the adjudicator's discretion will again be given in three classes—viz., ages under eleven, ages eleven to fifteen, and ages fifteen to seventeen. The books include Mrs. Meynell's *School of Poetry*, Philip Wayne's *Lyrics for Children*, Dent's *Junior Poetry Book*, *Rainbow Lanterns* by Emily Lewis, and a selection of other suitable verse books not exceeding one hundred volumes. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any competitor, and each MS. must bear the name and

address of the writer, and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school or teacher a special additional prize or prizes may be awarded, thus constituting a competition within the major general contest. All MSS. should be addressed to the Children's Verse Editor, POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before July 31st. Personal criticism of MSS. can only be given on payment of a fee of 5s. Several poems may be sent by teachers and others for a private opinion for this fee.

CAPTAIN FOXCROFT ON THE POET'S MIND.

WITH beautiful voice and persuasive manner Capt. Foxcroft, M.P., gave an intimate description of "The Poet's Mind" at a weekly meeting of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) at the Chapel of the Savoy. He pointed out that two fundamental qualities, not possessed by a large number who attempted to write verse, were emotion and expression. The stylist's work became a dead letter if he did not have feeling. The power to admire the beauteous forms of nature must be accompanied by the ability to infuse spirit into the pictures, and the poet of great capacity had a mind that was not limited by his own feelings but could enter into and describe the emotions and aspirations of others and have in itself the germ of all characters from priest to blackmailer. He must also feel the humour, laughter, light of the world, and have the power to use words that were so suitable and so beautiful that they illumined his thoughts and made them glow like jewels. Being endowed with these many mental and emotional powers he must combine them all to one moral, spiritual, divine end: the attempt to discover and reveal the ultimate truth and significance of life in the universal as well as the individual aspect. Statesmen and poets were closely allied—they must be imbued with insight into human character and a deep perspicacity with regard to human events—wisdom and foresight with the ability to give expression thereto. Capt. Foxcroft illustrated his theme by the recital of a number of his own poems.

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The U.S.A. Pullman Car Works has decided to name ten compartment and drawing-room cars after ten poets.

THE PROGRESS OF THE POETRY SOCIETY.

THE annual general business meeting of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) was held at the offices of the Society on April 28th, the President of the Kensington Centre (Mrs. Mends Gibson) in the chair, in the absence in the North of Mr. W. F. Rawnsley. The Hon. Treasurer (Mr. C. Oscar Gridley, J.P.), in presenting the annual financial statement and balance sheet, pointed out that all sources of income had shown gratifying increases, the gross receipts (exclusive of Centre deductions) exceeding £2,000. They had been able to place on reserve deposit during the year the sum of £250, and then felt able to increase the hitherto nominal allowance paid for secretarial and clerical work which had been carried on without remission and with rare devotion throughout the sixteen years of the Society's existence. This increase had been the subject of pious hopes for many years, and he was glad it had been given effect to as well as earned. Gratification was expressed at the favourable statement, and the various accounts were adopted.

The Hon. Director in his report pointed out that some concrete evidence of the Poetry Society's development was found in the Treasurer's report, which would carry greater proof of progress to many minds than any record they could give of the more intangible results secured and the greater amount of work done that cannot be represented in a financial statement or by increasing income. The Poetry Society was still doing a considerable amount of work for which no financial result could be shown, and was not yet reaping sufficient commercial harvest for the years that have gone, although they were indeed able to show that the locust has not eaten them entirely. It was satisfactory on the one hand to note that the Society had been able to carry on continuously and more or less effectively in a way that no other literary organisation has maintained, and that for the past year the expenses of this internal and secretarial administrative work had been more adequately met by the Society.

The obvious things done during 1924 were familiar to all members and had been recorded in the gazette of the Poetry Society, THE POETRY REVIEW. They included the prominent part we took in the celebration of the Byron Centenary, including the notable meeting at Byron's town house, at which all the world interested in Byron was represented ; and they had recorded with gratification the invitation received from the Greek Government that the Society be represented at the national celebrations in Greece, in connection with which the Society's representative received the Order of the Redeemer from the Greek Government. Other public and general

meetings had been held, but they still required co-operation and suggestions with regard to public meetings, which were essential to the maintenance of the Society and should be of an outstanding nature. They must have a definite *raison d'être* and should be representative of the Society as a whole, ordinary lectures and readings being adequately provided for by the Centres. The Monday afternoon readings which they had the privilege of giving at the Chapel of the Savoy had been continued throughout the year, with very good effect, being a regular weekly demonstration of the appeal of poetry, and serving their purposes by receiving more Press notice, including several leading articles, than much more ambitious and apparently more popular events. An instance occurred in the early part of the year, when the *Morning Post* based a leader on the President's reminiscences of Tennyson given at the Savoy in February, the repercussion of which had not yet died away.

The President in his letter referred to the most encouraging development of the work carried on in the name of the Society and on behalf of its members. Their serious consideration through The Poetry Review of young people's efforts in poetry was greatly appreciated wherever we have penetrated. The English mistress of the Louth school mentioned by Mr. Rawnsley, in submitting the collection of poems which gained for her school the President's prize, wrote: "We have recently formed a Poetry Society for the study of modern poetry and to encourage the writing of original verse, and hope to develop it on the lines suggested in The Poetry Review. May I add my warm thanks for much inspiration and delight, as well as invaluable help to a beginner in this kind of teaching, conveyed through The Poetry Review." Later, on receipt of the award and criticism, this lady wrote again: "I find it difficult to express our thanks at all adequately for the great help you have given, but please believe that we appreciate it very fully, and also fully realise our debt to The Poetry Review, which has been the greatest possible help all the time." Similar testimony from other quarters could be produced to support our claim to the exercise of exactly the right formative influence the Society was intended to exert. Similarly and co-equally, and perhaps more effectively, the examinations in Verse Speaking were making the Society's aims and objects effective in a practical way, far more beneficial, direct, and penetrating than any amount of talk on the importance of poetry in education. The financial statement again summarised, in figures development in this direction, but this again could not be realised without experience or explanation. The income represented fees

on the very lowest possible basis, very much lower than any similar scale of fees for similar work, which in no instance was as thorough and authoritative and sympathetic in this particular connection. While they did represent a much greater development than the actual amount involved would perhaps indicate, satisfactory though that increase was, they were not satisfied that the examinations had been adopted to anything like the extent they should have been by now. Largely due to their persistent insistence on the importance of the vocal interpretation of poetry, the subject had been taken up to a very much larger and more serious extent than one would have thought possible a dozen years ago, but the result had been that a good part of the development had passed into other hands, and they have been indirectly responsible for the formation of Verse Speaking Associations, Oxford Recitals, and even imitative examining bodies, which had deprived them somewhat of the material results of their spade work, although satisfactory to them as a pioneer body advocating the principles that had been adopted. Now that Dr. Hulbert was again available, and available to a much greater extent than he previously was, they have been able to get more widely into the provinces, but not yet able to utilise him to the extent to which they should have been able to do by now. Some 497 candidates out of the 900 who submitted themselves for examination last year obtained the certificate (366), bronze (107), or silver (34) medals of the Society. The previous year the awards were 446. This number does not represent even 10 per cent. of the possible number they should be dealing with in one year. An extension of the culminating Gold Medal examination would take place this year. Instead of it being a competition merely for the Lady Margaret Gold Medal it would be an examination for the Gold Medal of the Society, which would be awarded to as many candidates as the adjudicator considered reach the very high eurhythmical standard enforced, the Lady Margaret Medal being still awarded as such as the premier distinction of the year.

A great many members had little idea of what was carried on by the Society in their name. Too many were aware only of the personal interest provided for by the Centre meetings and the REVIEW, and did not realise that they helped to constitute a general body with important objects which it should be their greatest desire and pleasure to have promoted. Some individual members, especially some with the advantages of Centre meetings and social intercourse provided for them at a very nominal cost and without any trouble to them whatever, could not see what benefit was derived from the

contribution to headquarters, although as a matter of fact they would not themselves exist as members of the Poetry Society but for the existence of the general body of which they form a part. As opposed to their narrow conception of the Society and of the part they played in constituting it, a Dutch member who had been associated with them for many years and got no personal satisfaction or benefit beyond the receipt of THE POETRY REVIEW, that week for the second year in succession had voluntarily paid ten times the normal fee for which she was liable, as an expression of appreciation of THE POETRY REVIEW in particular and of the work the Society is attempting to do generally. They have similar expressions, though not accompanied by the financial testimony, from many out-of-the-way places, two of the latest being Samoa and Mexico. They had been helped materially during the year by the continued services of Mrs. Bartlett, which again could be represented to you in concrete form of dollars being received in the course of the year on the American account. They had had the advantage of the considerable premiums provided by Mrs. Bartlett for verse competitions, which had temporarily ceased, but might be revived to better purpose and for the general advantage of contributor members. From American, as well as this country, they receive many expressions of regard for THE POETRY REVIEW, of which the latest, received that day, in a letter dated April 15, from a New York member, may be accepted as typical: "I greatly enjoy THE POETRY REVIEW. It is far the best that comes out. It has such a range of subjects and such able contributors. The Spanish article this month is particularly fine and informing."

Another development with great potentialities, really immense possibilities, was the culmination of Judge Kazi's efforts in the formation of a Centre for the province of Sind, with His Highness the Ruler of Khairpur State as President. His Highness last year, by the way, became a patron of the Society and his Vizier a Vice-President. The significance of that lay in the fact that for several years Mr. Kazi had been co-operating with them in an effort to establish the Poetry Society in India and to get THE POETRY REVIEW taken in the schools and colleges. They were now getting into touch with other Indian States, and a former London member of the Society, now residing in Hyderabad, had promised to co-operate with Mr. Kazi in extending the Society in the Deccan.

The letter from Dr. Ellis, who was unable to attend this meeting, indicates another considerable development in the Society's handling of new verse, and the reason why it is important to us.

Dr. Ellis had been throughout the year of invaluable assistance as New Verse Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW, and in sympathetically and yet critically dealing with a very large amount of matter.

They trusted that something would be done in a practical way in encouraging the poetic outlook and in forming poetic taste by the effective development of the lectureships instituted by the Society.

The report was received with expressions of gratification and adopted.

The General Council was re-elected, with the addition of Mrs. Minshull. Cordial acknowledgement was made of the services of the General and Centre officials.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

At the subsequent annual meeting of the General Council the Lord Gorell was elected President-General in succession to Mr. Rawnsley, who after being the Elder Councillor for many years had served for three years as President with unwearied active interest and devotion. He had been at the disposal of the Society in every direction, had been a most sympathetic adviser and friend, and his rare culture and benignity which had permeated all his relations with the Society and its officials had developed a unique fellowship. The hon. director pointed out that during the past year Mr. Rawnsley, in spite of physical difficulties, had been exceptionally active on behalf of the Society, representing it in various ways as well as addressing an exceptional number of meetings. He had been the most representative and assiduous of their Presidents, proud of his office and animated by the ideals of the Society, which he personally, as well as collectively, expressed, always intent on promoting the appreciation of the best in poetry. On his retirement from the General Presidency, Mr. Rawnsley becomes Honorary President, thereby continuing distinguished official connection with Society, of which he is the oldest life member.

Mr. Gridley was formally elected Hon. Treasurer, with warm expressions of his long continued and intimate services and the close and unremitting attention he gives to the careful, wise administration of the Society's affairs, general as well as financial.

Recent elections of Vice-Presidents were confirmed, with the addition of Dr. Greville MacDonald and His Excellency Mon. Constantine Skermunt (Polish Minister).

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Invitations to meetings of the Poets' Fellowship, the Writers' Centre of the Poetry Society, will be sent on application, as meetings in London and the Northern district are arranged.

TENNYSON AND ALDWORTH.

An Invitation from H.H. The Gaekwar of Baroda.

H.H. The Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda very graciously invites the members of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) to visit Aldworth as his guests on July 11th. Some years ago His Highness acquired this former home of Tennyson, which has a national interest and appeal, and His Highness has since restored the terraces, gardens and ground as far as possible to the condition in which they were in when the poet died in 1892. The privilege of visiting it is greatly appreciated by the General Council, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will accept this delightful invitation. The provisional arrangements are for the main party to go down by train from Waterloo to Haslemere at 10.50 a.m., returning about 6 p.m. Members unable to travel till a later train may do so provided they notify the General Secretary on booking their tickets. A light lunch and tea will be provided by His Highness, and a meeting in which it is expected several distinguished Tennysonians will participate and at which Mr. W. F. Rawnsley will preside, will be held about 3 p.m.

* * * *

Sir James Knowles, the founder and editor of the *Nineteenth Century*, in *Tennyson and His Friends* (Macmillan), tells how he met Tennyson at the railway station at Haslemere in 1867 :—

"He explained how he came to be there—namely, because he was in search of a site where he might build a cottage to take refuge in from the tourists who made his life a burden to him in the Isle of Wight. He added, 'You are an architect; why should you not make the plans of it for me?' I said, 'With the greatest possible pleasure, upon one condition, that I may act professionally without making any professional charge, for I cannot be paid twice over, and you, Mr. Tennyson, have over-paid me already long ago—in the pleasure and delight your works have given me—for any little work I could do for you.' He protested, but in the end accepted my terms.

"The cottage, as he first proposed it, was to be a small square, four-roomed house, with a door in the middle, like one in which he was then staying near Haslemere. I went there to see him and to describe the plans and the question of a site. After inspecting several with him, he took me secretly to one which a friend had found out as being possibly procurable, and on which Aldworth was finally built. It was a natural terrace, formed just below the summit of Black Down, and was known as Green Hill. There was a potato patch where the house now stands—a little flat clearance in the midst

of sloping coppices that covered all the southern side of the hill; and it was a spot of ideal seclusion, just wide enough and no more for a moderately-sized house, quite perfect for his objects—almost too perfect in the way of inaccessibility, for it took years of negotiation and trouble to obtain a practicable road to it. The view from it was simply perfect, extending over the whole of woody Sussex to the South Downs and the sea. 'It wants nothing,' he said as he gazed at it, 'but a great river looping along through the midst of it.' 'Gloriously crimson flowers set along the edge of the terrace would burn like lamps against the purple distance'—as presently was realised.

"The plans for a four-roomed cottage gave way somewhat as I talked the matter over with Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson, the latter giving me certain rough ideas which she could not quite express by drawing, but which I understood enough to put into shape; and presently I went to Farringford with designs for a less unimportant dwelling. It grew and grew as it was talked over and considered, the details being all discussed with Mrs. Tennyson, while he contented himself by pretending to protest against any addition and improvement.

"At last, one day, when I brought sketches for an arcaded porch to complete the design, he put his foot down and said he would have nothing to do with it—that he would have no more additions—that it would ruin him and could not be entertained for a moment. He walked to and fro, coming back from time to time to the table where the drawing lay and looking at it. He admitted that he liked it more and more the more he looked at it, but presently cried out with simulated fury, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and ran out of the room. Then I knew that the porch was won. When it was built he got to be very fond of it, and used to call attention to the way in which the landscape was framed by the arches of it. He even had a picture of it made by a friend to show this effect.

"He laid the foundation stone of it on Shakespeare's birthday, April 23, 1868, few being there besides his great friend, Sir John Simeon, myself, and my wife, whom he dragged up the steep hillside in the blazing sunshine. He interfered very little about the progress of the work except as to various little accidental things which moved his fancy. For instance, a stone shield in the gable of one of the dormer windows had remained blank when all the rest were carved—simply because of a hesitation how best to fill it up. But when the time came at which it must be finished, if done at all, he stood spying up at it through his eyeglass for a long while, and then

decided to leave it blank—so that the last touch to the work might be decided hereafter by Fate, accident having kept it open so long.

"He was reminded by it of the blank shield in his own Idylls, of which Merlin asks, 'Who shall blazon it?—when and how?' and adds, 'Perchance when all our wars are done the brand Excalibur will be cast away.' In a similar way he would not let the figure of a stone Falcon be removed which had been set up as a model for approval at one corner of the parapet, but was never intended to stay there. He looked at it long and curiously, and laughed and said it seemed to grow queerer, that it was a pity to take it down; and there it remained ever after in its original solitariness, to his great content and amusement, which had a touch of seriousness in it.

"He made a great point of his favourite motto, *Gwyr yn erbyn y byd* ('Truth against the world'), being prominently emblazoned in tile mosaic at the threshold of the front door and in the pavement of the hall. The text, 'Gloria Deo in Excelsis,' in the carved band which surrounds the house, was the selection of Mrs. Tennyson. The formation of the terrace lawn in front of the house, with its boundary balustrade, interested him extremely; and when the vases were filled with splendid blossoms, standing out against the blue landscape, the vision he had foreseen from the potato patch was realised to his full satisfaction. The invariable and tormenting delays in finishing the house, however, annoyed him greatly, for he longed to get into it away from the tourists, and used to say he should never live to enjoy it long enough. When he did move in, he said he wanted to have each room for his own, and at first adopted, for sleeping in, the central top attic on the south front, which opened on to the lead flat of the large bay window on the first floor. He called it his balcony-room, and loved to stand out on the flat and watch the changes in the great prospect spread out before him. He ultimately gave this up for a guest's room, and took to the finer room below, which was always flooded with light, and was filled with bright moonshine when he died in it. On one occasion, when I was sleeping in the balcony-room, I was suddenly waked up by a thundering at the door and his great voice calling out, 'Get up and look out of the window.' I jumped out of bed accordingly, and saw the whole wide aspect turned into a flat, white, billowy ocean, with no trace of land at all, but with waves beginning to move and roll in it. The sun was just rising, and I stood to watch the gradual creation of a world as it were. From moment to moment the vast ocean broke up and rose away into clouds, uncovering the landscape

bit by bit—the hills first and the valleys last, until the whole great prospect came together again into its normal picture. It was delightful to see his enjoyment of everything in the new house from the hot-water bathroom downwards, for at first the hot bath seemed to attract him out of measure. He would take it four or five times a day, and told me he thought it the height of luxury 'to sit in a hot bath and read about little birds.'

"The following notes of a visit paid to him at Aldworth show the usual manner of his daily life there.

"He usually dined rather early, at 7 or 7.30 o'clock, and Mrs. Tennyson would generally carve (or in later times Hallam), according to the old-fashioned custom. He talked freely, with an abundance of anecdote and story, and full of humour and 'chaff' (no touch of pedantry or priggism could live in his presence); and always when at home made a move for dessert to another room—the morning room at Aldworth—where he would begin his bottle (pint) of port, and, with the exception of a glass or so, would finish it, talking all the time with entire geniality and abandon, and full of reminiscences of men and things. Sometimes he would recur to his grievances at the hands of his publishers, and pour out his complaints about them, until finally landed, to his entire satisfaction, with Macmillan.

"After dessert he would retire to his study and his after-dinner pipe, which he took quite by himself; and would then come into the drawing-room, whither the others had repaired some time, and join in general talk again and perhaps read, at some one's request, some of his own poems, till the ladies left for bed.* Then he would invite some favoured guest or guests to his study, and begin the confidential discussions and soliloquies which it was a priceless privilege—the most valued and treasured of privileges—to share and to listen to. At such times all his inmost thoughts and feelings, recollections and speculations of his life came out with the open simplicity of a child and the keen insight and far sight of a prophet; and one had glimpses into the mystery of things beyond one's own power of seeing, and as if seen through a telescope."

In an MS. note Mr. Aubrey de Vere adds:—

"Farringford he never forsook, though he added another home to

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* *Sunday, October* 27, 1872.—I asked A. T. at Aldworth what he thought he had done most perfect. He said, "Nothing," only fragments of things that he could think at all so—such as "Come down, O Maid," written on his first visit to Switzerland, and "Tears, idle Tears."

He told me he meant to write the siege of Delhi, an ode in rhyme, but was refused the papers.

it; and assuredly no poet has ever before called two such residences his own. Both of them were sweetened by the presence there, so graciously prolonged, of her to whom the lovers of song owe so deep a debt of gratitude. The second home was as well chosen as the first. It lifted England's great poet to a height from which he could gaze on a large portion of that English land which he loved so well, see it basking in its most affluent summer beauty, and only bounded by 'the inviolate sea.' Year after year he trod its two stately terraces with men the most noted of their time; statesmen, warriors, men of letters, science and art, some of royal race, some famous in far lands, but none more welcome to him than the friends of his youth. Nearly all of those were taken from him by degrees; but many of them stand successively recorded in his verse. The days which I passed there yearly with him and his were the happiest days of each year. They will retain a happy place in my memory during whatever short period my life may last; and the sea-murmurs of Freshwater will blend with the sighing of the woods around Aldworth, for me, as for many more worthy, a music, if mournful, yet full of consolation."

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The Monday "readings" at the Savoy Chapel are continued during July by Mr. Godfrey Elton, whose *Years of Peace* has increased an already high reputation for fine poetry imbued with deep feeling; Mr. W. J. Roffey, who will deal with "Norman Gale, the Poet of the Countryside"; Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, who commemorates the Jean Ingelow anniversary; and Mrs. Lambert Lack.

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Readers who wish to participate in a "Pilgrimage to Canterbury" are requested to communicate with the General Secretary.

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The next meeting of the Poets' Fellowship (Northern Group) will be held on July 11th in Manchester, when Dr. Oliver C. de C. Ellis will give a paper on "How to Write a Poem." Invitations may be had on application to the General Secretary, The Poetry Society, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

VERSE SPEAKING PASS LISTS.

The Examiners report a noticeable improvement in the general standard, particularly in the more advanced grades, at the Spring auditions in London and the provinces. Throughout there has been little difficulty in hearing every word spoken, clear definite articulation, seldom degenerating into formally precise or affected enunciation—a notable achievement for so considerable and general a body of candidates. There has been also a marked improvement in what has always been very apparent, particularly in Sheffield—the musical quality of the voices.

The candidates passed with " Honours " are distinguished by the Examiners as examples of really fine artistic speakers who approach very nearly the high standard aimed at, combining cultivated, refined voices effectively used, with individual intelligence in interpretation, showing that the speaker is at one with the thought and emotion expressed, going a long way towards giving an ideal impression. Too often, even with a delightful voice, it is too apparent that the speaker has little regard or sympathy for the words spoken, which remain outside his or her mind. A great deal of credit for the actual results is due to the teachers, but the real interpretation depends on the individual performer, who must not be content with being the instrument of an effective trainer but must bring personality to bear on artistry.

Dr. Hulbert is giving a series of lecture-demonstrations at various centres. Details may be obtained from the Registrar.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES, March 14th, 1925.

Certificates—Junior (Honours) : Olwen Morris, Gordon Lumley. (Special Mention) : Bessie Watson, Olga Crosby, Constance Cranstoun, Melicent Embling, Betty Bow, Nora Ross. (Pass) : Freda G. Rawe, Dorothy Maddison.

Senior (Honours) : Agnes R. Mawson. (Special Mention) : Elsa D. Coldray. (Pass) : Norman Maddison.

Adult (Honours) : Ethel Fawcett, Joyce L. Dodsworth, Monica Smith. (Special Mention) : Frederick H. Pennock.

Bronze Medals—Junior (Special Mention) : Winifred Dawson. (Pass) : Margaret J. Barrowcliff, Margaret Appleton, Joan Glover.

Senior (Honours) : Edith Hodgson. (Special Mention) : Olga Powell. (Pass) : Freda Wright.

Adult (Pass) : Mary Henderson.

Silver Medals—Junior (Pass) : Margaret M. Barker, Margaret Watson.

Adult (Special Mention) : Annie Hodgson.

BEXHILL-ON-SEA, March 23rd, 1925.

Certificates—Junior (Honours): Joan Isabel Krishaner.

Senior (Honours): Roslyn Bassendale, Margaret Elmore, Mary R. Galloway, Norah Irene Davis, Phyllis Tatham. (Special Mention): Helen H. Kimber, Gabrielle Grace Nixon, Mary Wakefield. (Pass): Lois Betty Coad, Zanzie Doreen Clutsom, Ada Blair, Mollie Lindley, Honor Piper, Betty Zeal, Barbara Cow, Rhona Robinson, Gwen May.

SHEFFIELD, May 26th, 1925,

Certificates—Junior (Honours): Sylvia Hunt, Amouri Wallis, Emmie Wallis, Joan C. Bailey, Nancy Priestley. (Special Mention): Kathleen Jagger, Minnie Dempsey, Norah Sutton, Kathleen Morris, Doris Glossop. (Pass): Mary Killham, Valerie Goldblum, Reita Brammer, Phyllis Thorpe, Celia Townrow.

Senior (Honours): Tessie Warner, Alice Osborne, Cissie Woolf, Veda Middleton, Vera Weston, Cecilia Jenkins. (Special Mention): Margaret Moore, Marjory Boyers, Frances Raymond, Jessie Purkiss, Phyllis Middleton, Winifred Glossop, Jenny Bargh. (Pass): Olga Wood, Vera Haslam, Roy Andrews, Lottie Bates, Margaret Reaney, Edith Revill.

Adult (Honours): Emmie Beatson.

Bronze Medals.—Junior (Special Mention): Margaret Fearnehough, Joan Middleton, Dora Jenning. (Pass): Doreen Abbey, Eleanor Platts, Marjorie Williams.

Senior (Special Mention): Kathleen Ibbotson.

Adult (Honours): Gwendoline Jarvis, Rhoda Murday. (Special Mention): Norah Wales, Norah Hutchinson. (Pass): Annie E. Wroe.

Silver Medals—Junior (Special Mention): Joyce Fletcher.

Senior (Honours): Christian M. Thomson. (Special Mention): Eileen Bates. (Pass): Maimie Wilkinson, Nellie Shipman.

Adult (Honours): Ida Ogley, Winifred Hodkin, Kathleen Walker, Ida Robinson, Hedley Hepworth.

MANCHESTER, May 27th, 1925.

Certificates—Junior (Pass): Joyce Tuson.

Senior (Honours): Marion Gleave. (Pass): Gwen Hall, Winifred Barker.

Adult (Special Mention): Alfred Wolstencroft. (Pass): Christina Cornish.

Bronze Medals.—Junior (Pass): Joan Mary Skeet.

Adult (Honours): Betty Starr, Norah Lees Allman. (Pass): Winifred Hemm, Agnes Skidmore, M. Beck.